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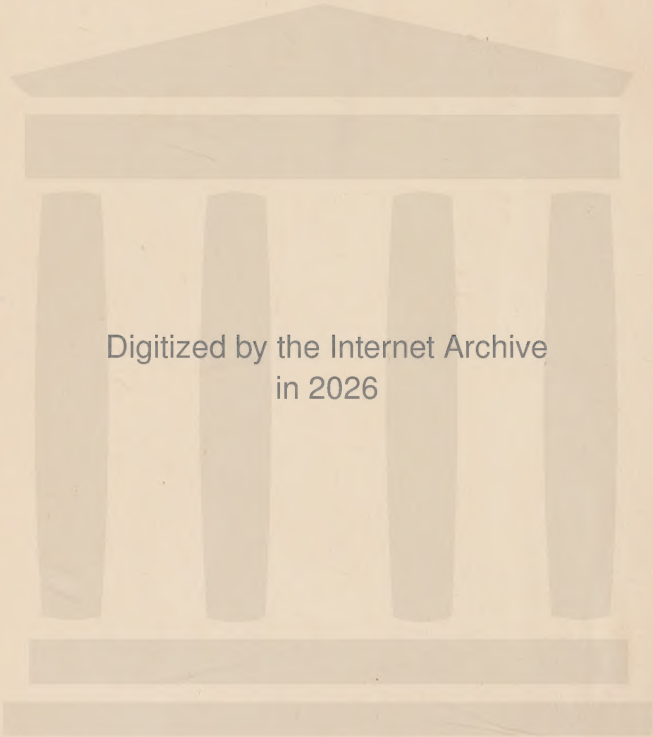

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Wife of George 1
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LIVES OF THE HANOVERIAN QUEENS OF ENGLAND

BY

ALICE DRAYTON GREENWOOD

VOL. I

SOPHIA DOROTHEA OF CELLE
WIFE OF GEORGE I

CAROLINE OF ANSBACH
QUEEN OF GEORGE II

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PREFACE

THE eighteenth century, which gave to England a new royal dynasty from Germany, gave to her also an unprecedented succession of German queens-consort. With the exception of James I, who had fetched his queen from Denmark, all the English sovereigns since Richard II had wedded consorts either of English blood or from the Romance lands, from France, the Spanish peninsula or Italy, never from Germany—for we can hardly seriously count Anne of Cleves among our queens. But the Hanoverian kings wedded among their own nation, and thereby imparted an even stronger German atmosphere to the court than was, under the circumstances, inevitable. It has been suggested that the influence which queens from the Romance countries exercised among us, in the sphere of manners and arts, was probably a wholesome corrective to our naturally Teutonic bent. The German tendencies of the court in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries almost certainly contributed to the rapid decline of old native customs and amusements, and in so far were unfortunate.

The biographies of these German queens Miss Strickland would not deal with in her "Lives of the Queens of England," on the very proper ground that the materials for a serious and impartial narrative were not yet available. That barrier no longer exists, rather the flood of information poured forth in published memoirs and correspondence, together with the stores available in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, and the volumes of the Historical MSS. Commission, render the biographer's task that of selection from embarrassing riches. All that the present writer can lay claim to is to have endeavoured to select from the most trustworthy of the printed sources and the most promising of the unprinted, what appears to give the best evidence upon the character and activities of these five German princesses.

Sophia Dorothea is included among them, partly for the sake of completeness, partly as the ancestress of the royal house, and partly because of her very real importance in the history of the royal family. The difficulty of tracing the much disputed course of her career is enhanced by the semi-fictitious works which have professed to relate her true history, and have confused fact with fiction to a degree almost impossible to unravel. The sources from which the following life has been compiled are principally (besides the general out-

line given in Havemann's and Heinemann's respective histories of the Brunswick duchies) the following: the critical papers of Dr. A. W. Ward in the "Edinburgh Review," January, 1901, and "Saturday Review," 11th November, 1882; the publications of the late Professor Adolf Köcher, viz., "Die Prinzessin von Ahlden," in Sybel's "Historische Zeitschrift" (1882, vol. xlviii), "Memoiren der Herzogin Sophie nachmals Kurfürstin von Hanover," and articles in "Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Niedersachsen" (1878); Dr. A. W. Ward's "The Electress Sophia"; M. H. de Beaucaire's "Une Mésalliance dans la Maison de Brunsvic"; Count Schulenburg-Klosterrode's "Die Herzogin von Ahlden"; A. J. H. Schaumann's "Sophia Dorothea Prinzessin von Ahlden"; and "Memoirs of Sophia Dorothea . . . including a diary of the Conversations . . . from the Originals." This book, published anonymously (1845), is now known to be the compilation of the late Mr. Robert Folkestone Williams, and therefore trustworthy. The valuable part is not, however, the "Conversations," which were manifestly composed, whether by the Princess herself or by one of her apologists, many years after they purport to have taken place, but the Appendix, which contains a brief narrative of "Particulars concerning . . . Princess of Ahlden . . . written by the lady of honour to the Electoral Princess,

Mademoiselle von dem Knesebeck." This the editor states to be printed from the original MS. at Vienna, which must (he says) have been written, as its internal evidence shows, between 1710 and 1713. Nor does there appear to be any reasonable doubt that it was the genuine work of Fräulein von dem Knesebeck.

Kramer's "Denkwürdigkeiten von Aurora von Königsmarck," is also a book too summarily ignored. Not only do the letters and business papers bear internal proofs of genuineness, but the originals are still in existence in Germany. Among them is a statement purporting in the MS. to be by Fräulein von dem Knesebeck, which is said to be in Aurora's handwriting. But the inference is, not that it is a fiction, but that it was either dictated to Aurora or written down by her from memory, after the meeting which she almost certainly held with Knesebeck after the latter's escape from prison. Though Professor Köcher pronounced against its authenticity, that great authority also condemned the Lund letters, now known to be genuine. One or two pieces in Kramer's volume are in all probability exaggerations or inventions brought to Aurora, in later years, by persons who hoped to get money from her. To condemn the whole book on account of these, which merely formed part of the materials edited, is absurd.

The Letters of the Electress Sophia and of

the Duchess of Orleans (see below) are valuable, if it be remembered that the writers had a strong point of view and the former sometimes "a purpose" in writing. "Briefe der Kurfürstin Sophie von Hannover an die Raugräfinnen und Raugrafen zu Pfalz" (1888); "Correspondance . . . avec son frère," Charles Louis. Cf. also the correspondence of Leibniz; Malortie's Collections on "Der Hannoverische Hof," from which the untrustworthy Vehse ("Geschichte der Deutschen Höfe," vol. 18, Braunschweig) sometimes drew; the "Mémoires" of St. Simon and of de Gourville, Toland's panegyric, etc.

But the principal sources of information for the catastrophe of Sophia Dorothea must be (1) the authentic correspondence which passed between her and Count Königsmarck so far as it has been preserved and is known, and (2) the letters of the English envoys at that time accredited to the three Brunswick courts of Celle, Hanover, and Wolfenbüttel. (1) A series of the lovers' letters is preserved at Lund in Sweden. They were copied exactly, in the original French and cipher, for the late Mrs. Everett Green, who at one time contemplated a work upon the subject. This copy is now in the British Museum, together with her annotations and commencement of an Introduction (Add. MS. 28259). A translation of the Lund letters has been printed by the late Mr. W. H. Wilkins

in his "Love of an Uncrowned Queen," in which work he also completes the collation which Mrs. Green had begun of the contents of the letters with the despatches of Sir Wm. Colt, and arranges the letters in what is probably their correct order. The corroboration of the despatches, as Mrs. Green had discovered and Mr. Wilkins repeats, absolutely proves the authenticity of the letters. The quotations and references here made are from Mrs. Green's MS. in the British Museum. (2) Of the reports and correspondence of the English diplomatic agents the most valuable for this purpose are those of Sir Wm. Dutton Colt, 1689-1693, in the P.R.O. (State Papers, Germany), of Cressett, 1693-1702 (B.M. Add. MSS. 28897, 23616, 23617), and those of Stepney, 1694-5, and Poley, 1705 (P.R.O.). The semi-fictitious "Römische Octavia," 1711, of Duke Antony Ulric of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel and its host of progeny will be duly mentioned in the course of the narrative.

With Queen Caroline we are upon different ground. The one German queen-consort whose influence was undeniably important in the political world naturally makes frequent appearance in many a volume of contemporary correspondence and of modern history. The facts are well enough known; it is the character which, despite the flood of light, remains elusive.

The principal authorities are sufficiently well-

known: the "Dictionary of National Biography," the "Political State of Great Britain" (the predecessor of the Annual Register) for the years 1714-1737, the "Memoirs" of Lord Hervey, Campbell's "Lives of the Chancellors," the "Diary" of Lady Cowper; the memoirs or correspondence of the following: Lady Suffolk; Lady Sundon; Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough; Mrs. Delany; Pope; Lady Louisa Stuart; Leibniz; Horace Walpole; the "Lives" of Walpole, Whiston, S. Clarke, Chesterfield (Matys), and Hardwicke (Harris); Onslow's "Notes" to Burnet's History (1833), Kemble's "State Papers," Ellis's "Original Letters," Wright's "Caricature History of the Georges," Pyne's "Royal Residences," Law's "Hampton Court," Gay's "Trivia," the "Surveys of London" of various dates, contemporary periodicals, such as the "Gentleman's Magazine," the "Craftsman," the "Freeholder," and various newspapers. Among the unpublished sources are the despatches of the English representatives at Hanover, viz., Poley's, in the P.R.O., giving an account of George's courtship of Caroline, and Howe's, B.M. Add. MS. 7075, which describes the first quarrel between George and his father. The Bentinck papers, Egerton MS. 1717, contain interesting details, as do Stowe MSS. 231, 246, 248, Add. MS. 22627, and letters printed as appendix to Stanhope's History.

To both Sophia Dorothea and Caroline a good many references are made in the entertaining correspondence of Charlotte Elizabeth, Duchess of Orleans, the Electress Sophia's favourite niece, who hated Sophia Dorothea and loved Caroline "like her own child." Her comments are scattered through the numerous volumes of her letters, especially in "Aus den Briefen der Herzogin Charlotte von Orleans an die Kurfürstin Sophie von Hannover" (ed. Bodemann, 1891), "Briefe . . . an Frau von Harling und dessen Gemahl" (1895), Briefe . . . an die Raugräfin Louise (ed. Menzel, 1843), "Correspondance de Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans" (ed. Jaeglé, 1880).

In conclusion the writer begs to express her gratitude to Mrs. S. C. Lomas and to the Master of Peterhouse, Dr. A. W. Ward, for much wise counsel and kind help in tracking sources, and her regret that she has not been better able to carry it into effect.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE v

SOPHIA DOROTHEA OF CELLE

Wife of George I

Chap. I. Early Life 3
II. Count Königsmarck 41
III. Captivity 104

CAROLINE OF ANSBACH

Queen of George II

Chap. I. Early Life 141
II. England 167
III. Princess of Wales: English Politics 196
IV. The Quarrel with the King . . 223
V. Caroline's Court at Leicester House and Richmond 241
VI. The King's Persecution . . . 258
VII. The Reconciliation and the South Sea 266
VIII. Queen of England 287
IX. Foes and Friends 305

PAGE

CHAP. X. CAROLINE'S POLITICAL WORK . . 320
XI. DOMESTIC LIFE 346
XII. FRITZ 372
XIII. THE LAST YEAR 394

INDEX 421

PORTRAITS

Sophia Dorothea of Celle.
From a mezzotint by W. Faithorne . *Frontispiece*

Caroline of Ansbach.
From a portrait by Charles Jervas in the National Portrait Gallery . . *to face p.* 141

MAP

Sketch Map of Brunswick-Lüneburg (Hanover)
to face p. 1

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SOPHIA DOROTHEA OF CELLE

WIFE OF GEORGE I

BORN 1666; MARRIED 1682; DIVORCED 1694; DIED 1726

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SOPHIA DOROTHEA

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE, 1666-1688

IF some apology seem to be required for the inclusion among English queens of one who was never crowned, nor even so much as saw this country, it may be pleaded that to omit the ancestress of the succeeding sovereigns of the new royal house would leave an awkward gap in what is, practically, a connected account of the family life of our monarchs. The wife of George I bequeathed to several of her descendants, not altogether to their or our advantage, something of her own strongly marked characteristics, and her tragic catastrophe exercised a prolonged influence upon the family history, for in it began the domestic feud which agitated the royal family for several generations. In the eighteenth century it was still uncertain whether the princess had ever been formally divorced; even Horace Walpole was unable to satisfy himself on this point, and if she was not, she was undoubtedly queen consort *de jure*, although uncrowned and in a German prison.

The misfortune which pursued Sophia Dorothea in life may be held in some sort to cling still to her memory, for neither in her own age nor later has her cause been pleaded with any of the skill and eloquence which has cast a certain air of glamour over the more theatrical tragedy of her descendant, Queen Caroline II, while it has been plunged into even greater obscurity than George I took pains to cast over it by professed apolo-

gists who have mingled, almost inextricably, fact with fiction in the attempt to create a conventional romance out of the Princess's history.

It was William III who singled out the granddaughter of James I, the Electress Sophia of Hanover, as the fittest representative of the royal line of England when the childless Mary and Anne should have ceased to reign. His designation received parliamentary sanction just before his death in the Act of Succession (1702), so that the Electress and her family occupied the position of recognized heirs during the whole of the reign of Anne, and both Sophia and her son, the Elector George, gradually became known by correspondence and report to the English political world. English visitors to Hanover spoke with gratitude of their warm reception, and with enthusiasm of the stately charm of the Electress, in years actually older than Queen Anne herself, but in spirit and in physical energy so much younger. Her son, the Elector George, future king of England, taciturn and slow though he was, impressed them as a dignified master of a court almost magnificent in its style, and although he cared so little for his destined kingdom as never to have learned its language, he was at least as familiar with French as German, and they could see that he was well served by able ministers and respected, even liked, by his subjects. His son, the future George II, was a lively and affable prince, who spoke English fluently, did not disguise his interest in that country and had read of its history with his grandmother. He and his beautiful wife Caroline were charming to the English visitors, in fact, everything about the ducal, or more correctly electoral, family of Hanover was seen rose-coloured.

But from the court was absent, and long had been absent, the beautiful and attractive woman who should have stood by George Louis' side as the future queen of

England, nor did any one appear to remember, far less dare to mention, so much as the existence of the unhappy Sophia Dorothea.

English visitors to the Hanoverian court in the days of Queen Anne were, however, not very numerous, for that Queen, like the great Elizabeth, manifested an extreme distaste for any mention of her successors, and was apt to consider a show of regard to them as a proof of disloyalty to herself. William had acted very differently. He always cultivated a good understanding with the Duchess Sophia and her husband Ernest Augustus, and was on terms of personal friendship with the latter's elder brother, Duke George William of Celle, the father of Sophia Dorothea, so that English envoys, messengers, or visitors who had in his day made acquaintance with the courts of Hanover and Celle, must have well remembered the beauty, the vivacity, and the strange and gloomy fate of the princess whom nobody mentioned.

Charles II was King of England in the years when Sophia Dorothea was living her happy childhood in the noble castle of Celle. The great pile rose, as it still rises, from its sloping green gardens, girdled by a sleepy moat stream, close above the red roofs of the picturesque little town, small even in those days for a sovereign capital, though Sophia Dorothea's father, Duke George William, was a petty potentate of some importance.

The eldest of the three brother dukes[1] of Brunswick-Lüneburg, he knew how to make himself of value. In that incessant war between the Emperor and Louis XIV, which almost fills the history of Europe in the seventeenth century, he and his brothers were staunch on the imperial side. They trained and maintained a number of excellent troops quite out of proportion to the size and resources of their dominions, and hired out the regiments,

[1] They were four originally, but the eldest, Christian Louis, had died in 1665, and George William succeeded him.

for which the Emperor, or sometimes the Republic of Venice, readily paid high subsidies, and which were then despatched, often under the lead of one of their own princes, to fight Frenchmen or Turks, although the dukes themselves were technically at peace. As their subjects also contributed to the upkeep of the army, George William and his brothers reaped a considerable surplus as well as the credit of providing for the defence of the land, and secured a larger place in international politics than would otherwise fall to the masters of so small a territory as the Lüneburg half of Brunswick. That the population had to fill up the ever-recurring gaps in the ranks —since few who marched to Hungary or Greece ever returned—did not produce much difficulty. The Thirty Years' War and the continual fighting with France had accustomed Germans to constant warfare; all they hoped for was to escape its ravages in their own homes, and from this the good folk of Celle and Hanover were fairly safe under their politic princes.

The territories of Brunswick-Lüneburg (known later to the English as "Hanover," from the capital city) were, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, divided among the ducal brothers. Duke George William held the principal portion, the capital of which was Celle; the next brother, John Frederick, held Calenberg, or Hanover, as, in accordance with English usage, it is best to name it; and the youngest, Ernest Augustus, the husband of James I's granddaughter Sophia, was secular bishop of Osnabrück, and in 1679 succeeded to Hanover on John Frederick's death.

Ernest Augustus was linked with his brother of Celle in the closest friendship, dating from the days of early youth when the two had been inseparable companions in pleasure, in travel, and even in wooing. Both were handsome and agreeable, possessed of an excellent taste in music and the drama, lavish—indeed extravagant—in

their pleasures. They feasted, dressed, gambled, and made love in the highest style known to the fashionable world of France and Italy, for in those times the German aristocracy and petty courts were in language and manners for the most part French. In middle life, when the two dukes were established in their respective capitals, they took rank among the leading patrons of culture. The courts of Celle and Hanover were, like the others of that day, modelled as far as possible after the pattern set by Louis XIV at Versailles. George William partially reconstructed his old castle at Celle in a modified Italian style and turned it into a magnificent palace of some two hundred apartments. The long corridors and ample saloons were painted by Italian artists, and the mound from which the great pile rose was laid out in gardens, though the spacious tastes of the duke and his lady required as well a "French" garden and an "Italian" garden in the suburbs of the tiny town below. The more urban capital of Hanover, whose *Schloss*, however, was of smaller dimensions, could boast a more modern and French style of architecture, and possessed a fine library and a group of distinguished men of learning. In both courts music, the drama, and in particular the new art of opera were presented in greater perfection than in any neighbouring capital, or in London, or even, said connoisseurs, than in Vienna itself.

Yet there was a wide difference, in certain important respects, between the two homes where were growing up the boy and girl cousins destined to be the founders of the new royal line of England. At Osnabrück (or, after 1679, at Hanover) the seven children of Ernest Augustus and Sophia, six of them boys, of whom George Louis was the eldest, were being brought up in the midst of a luxury and dissipation which increased as time added to the resources of their father. But they were held in check by a military education and a sternly exacted

obedience to their father's will. He seldom cared to see his children, so they were solemn and restrained (says the Duchess Sophia) when in his presence, and they had to observe an extremely strict code of etiquette which served in the stead of a code of morality, generally ignored by the princes of that dynasty. For, excellent wife and devoted mother as the famous Sophia was, she was pitifully without influence over either husband or children. From his childhood young George was accustomed to see his mother's first lady-in-waiting, Countess Platen, the wife of the principal minister, treated by his father, by the court, and by people in general as a personage of at least equal importance with the duchess herself. Those were the days when the position of mistress to a ruling prince was a post openly acknowledged, and, on the continent, coveted; and it can hardly have been a surprise to any one at Hanover when the young heir succumbed to the charms of Countess Platen's younger sister, Frau von Bussche, who was also a lady of the duchess's retinue. George, taciturn and cold-tempered, cared little for any amusement but hunting, and took no interest in the plays and festivities over which the duke loved to preside, but in the severer sphere of politics father and son were perfectly in accord. Duke Ernest Augustus was bent upon an ambitious scheme. He meant to consolidate the whole of his dominions and those of his elder brother into one compact duchy which should thenceforth be no longer subdivided among brothers, in the customary German way, but descend intact to the eldest son, and be of size and importance sufficient to induce the Emperor to raise it to the rank of an *Electorate*, like Saxony and Brandenburg. This plan set aside the interests of the younger sons, and there resulted, in consequence, a division within the family, George and his father on one side, and the younger brothers, with whom their mother sympathized, on the

other, but no open breach took place for many years. George was a good deal away from his home so soon as he was old enough to go on foreign campaigns. He was a keen soldier and no despicable commander; William of Orange had a high regard for him; and on the battlefield his cold temperament would warm almost to enthusiasm.

Thirty miles away from Hanover, in the hereditary castle of Celle, was born, in the year of the Great Fire of London, 1666, the only child of Duke George William who survived infancy, Sophia Dorothea. And there she grew up in an atmosphere of tender and indulgent affection, for the etiquette of Celle was as much laxer than that of Hanover as its morals were better. The dancing and acting, hunting and feasting, were much alike in the two courts, save that the Duke of Celle hunted rather more and danced rather less than his younger brother. He liked to carry his family for weeks at a time to some remote hunting box, where etiquette was laid aside and the days were spent in hunting and in perfect freedom. He was both more straightforward and more easy-going than the younger Duke, and by no means so skilful a financier, so that as time went on he grew poorer, while Ernest Augustus was growing wealthier and more important. Of discipline the pretty little girl got little or none, for her father spoiled her and her mother adored her, while she had been from babyhood, not unnaturally, a favourite in court and city alike, for the people of Celle showed much affection to their kindly, generous, ducal family.

Nevertheless, Sophia Dorothea must early have become aware (in those outspoken times) that there was something which made her position in life less dignified and assured than that of her cousins. She was not considered, outside her own home, as quite the social equal of other princely children. Her mother, though she

always presided over the duke's court and household, was never styled "Duchess," nor was she prayed for as a member of the ducal family in church,—that dignified old building in the city which always remained the state church of the simple Protestant dukes at Celle. Worst of all, when visits were exchanged by the two families, the Duchess Sophia was wont to evince a cold and sometimes sneering manner towards Sophia Dorothea's mother, very different from the warm friendship she accorded to the father, and even ministers or messengers from that court habitually used only the simple title of "Madame de Harburg."

The reason of all this lay, in the first instance, in those German rules of hereditary nobility and *Ebenbürtigkeit* which were, even in the seventeenth century, something of an enigma to English people. Properly speaking, and in the eyes of law, a prince could marry only a princess, or a lady of some family of "equal" descent, and though, as *a man*, he might with the sanction of religion marry a lady of lower standing, the law would not recognize her as his wife nor the children as legitimate inheritors, while religion, on the other hand, could not in principle permit even a reigning prince to have two wives at once, accommodating though Protestant pastors were to their sovereigns in the matter of bigamy, ever since the days of Luther. Thus, though a prince might wed "morganatically," he could not get either wife or children treated as legitimate.

Now Sophia Dorothea's mother, Eleonora d'Olbreuse, sprang from an ancient house among the Huguenot nobility of France, and George William had been completely conquered by her beauty and gentle charm while on one of his journeys of pleasure in Italy. But in her virtue and dignity he had found something wholly different from the attractions of the rather numerous sirens among whom he had been accustomed to amuse himself.

Noble ladies must perforce, in those days, choose between matrimony and a convent. Eleonora's other admirers relinquished the field to the ardent duke, and he at length succeeded in inducing her to link her life with his, vowing that no other woman should henceforth concern him—a vow which he apparently kept. From that moment his one aim in life was to secure for the woman he loved the position, in social and legal consideration, which she occupied in his own esteem. The obstacle of rank might be overcome in one, and only in one, manner. The Emperor, vague as his authority had become over the congeries of states which composed the Empire, was still the undisputed arbiter of rank and honour, and his fiat might raise Eleonora d'Olbreuse to princely degree and permit a legal alliance with her. And since the duke had known how to make himself of service to the Emperor, it was likely that he might reckon on complaisance in so personal a matter as the legitimation of his wife and child.

That the Duke of Celle did not immediately take the step obvious to love and honour, and prefer his request at the court of Vienna, was due to an obstacle for which he had only himself to blame. He was caught in the tangled consequences of his own former mistakes. Earlier in life it was he, not Ernest Augustus, who had first applied for the hand of the beautiful and accomplished Princess Sophia. Her brother, the Elector Palatine, had given his formal consent, the settlement was drawn up, and the marriage announced, when the duke flung off to Venice for one more visit of dissipation, and there declared that he absolutely could not tie himself down in the respectable chains of matrimony.

The apparently impossible seems always to have held a fascination for George William; it roused his rather sleepy faculties to vigour. He resolved that he would neither fulfil his engagement nor insult the Palatine

family, and he suggested that if Ernest Augustus would step into his place the match might be made as advantageous to Sophia as if he had wedded her himself. Sophia saved her dignity by tranquilly replying that a suitable establishment was all she required, and that it was all one to her which brother went with it. And when Ernest Augustus astutely made a few difficulties, his elder brother persuaded him by settling a very liberal income upon him and solemnly undertaking never to marry himself, so that in course of time Sophia's husband should succeed to both the dukedoms of his two elder brothers, while she herself would never have to share with another the honours of duchess when—as often happened—George William and Ernest Augustus were living together in the same home.

Accordingly the exchange was made, the first of several bargains between the brothers, whereby the elder secured his own convenience to the more solid benefit of the younger, till in course of time a very considerable share of George William's revenues and property got transferred to the exchequer of the more astute Ernest Augustus. In consequence of this family compact the appearance of Mademoiselle d'Olbreuse upon the scene alarmed the younger duke and the Duchess Sophia terribly. There was, of course, nothing to make George William keep his word about remaining a bachelor save his own honour, nor could they see any reason in his plea of honourable duty towards Eleonora, whom they persistently spoke of as a mere adventuress. The Duke of Celle found himself for the second time in the awkward plight of wanting to undo his promise without breaking his word. Only by getting the consent of his brother and sister-in-law to his change of action could his honour be saved; and for years he laboured to bribe or soothe them into allowing him to raise Eleonora to a position of personal equality, declaring that he would never seek

to bestow the ducal inheritance upon her children. On this point, however, the other couple declined to trust him—"the same old song as before," cried Sophia scornfully, and perhaps not without excuse, and it was not till it became evident that Sophia Dorothea would be the only child that they began to relent, since the ducal succession went in the male line. For a good many years, therefore, all that the Duke of Celle could do was to declare that he regarded Eleonora as his wife in the eyes of God (on which Sophia flippantly observed that that was better than in the eyes of men), and to make provision for her and the little daughter by gifts from the lands and moneys which were within his own power. Even for this, however, he had to obtain the guarantee of his heir, Ernest Augustus, who used to refuse to give his consent until the Duke of Celle bestowed upon himself gifts or settlements of equal value.

It was not, then, till Sophia Dorothea was nine years of age that all the difficulties were cleared away, and that her mother, already created by the Emperor a "Countess of the Empire," and raised to princely degree, was formally declared to be wedded by the Duke (1675), was greeted by the imperial ambassador as Duchess (1676), and, the finishing touch, prayed for in the church.

George William had from the first been anxious about his daughter's future. He had procured her naturalization as a Frenchwoman, in the hope that her mother's country might be a possible refuge for her, should he die suddenly. As years went on the increasing strictness of Louis XIV as to religion, and the steadfastness with which Eleonora held to the Protestant creed, rendered this possibility unlikely, but it seemed, after all, of little importance, for even before the Duke had secured his wife's elevation to the ducal position he had procured an imperial decree which elevated his daughter to princely rank, and bestowed on her the right

to bear the ducal arms when she should wed. This placed the child, at the age of eight, within the sacred circle of marriageable princesses, much to the disgust of the unfriendly uncle and aunt, who considered it "very inconsistent" of George William to legitimatize her: "It was not at all necessary, and it cost him 15,000 crowns," which they regarded as a deduction from their own rightful inheritance. They were no better pleased by the pains the Duke of Celle was taking to bestow so rich a dowry upon his daughter as should make her an object rather of envy than of condescension. He had already given to his wife large estates which brought in a handsome income, and a part of this, besides other sums of money, was laid aside to be the portion of the little princess.

The Duchess Sophia, who treated the mother, whom she hated, with unpleasant airs of superiority, expressed nothing but contempt for the daughter;—so badly brought up, imbued with all the bad principles of her mother, a flirt at ten years old, she was certainly destined to come to a bad end, and was "born to revenge us all" upon her mother; such were the imputations of the Duchess's spite. George William she easily forgave, womanlike; it was to be all Eleonora's fault, and of her the inventive Sophia never wrote, in that voluminous family correspondence of hers, without some bitter sneer or some insulting epithet absolutely impossible to transcribe. Her view, however, was not that taken by others. Illegitimacy was then considered in European courtly circles as an almost technical matter: Sophia herself was warmly attached to a family of illegitimate nephews and nieces, whose father, her beloved brother the Elector Palatine, had actually insisted on taking a second "wife" during the lifetime of the first.[1] Now,

[1] The titles "Raugraf" and "Raugräfin" were given to his second family of sons and daughters.

therefore, that imperial decrees had set the mother and daughter at Celle in the orthodox rank, there was no lack of princely suitors for the young girl whose "little hand held muckle gold."

The nearest was first in the field. Duke Antony Ulric of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel obtained a promise of the heiress's hand for his eldest son, a lad of nineteen. The Wolfenbüttel branch of the Brunswick Guelphs was near akin to the House of Brunswick-Lüneburg, and the marriage would have been a very suitable one, as keeping the rich dowry in the family, and drawing closer the ties which linked the two branches together. Moreover, Sophia Dorothea would, in all likelihood, have found a happy home, for Antony Ulric, who entertained a personal dislike of Sophia and her husband, was very friendly with both the Duke and Duchess of Celle, and proved himself, indeed, an advocate of both mother and daughter to the end. But this fair prospect, unhappily, opened only to be destroyed by the untimely death of the bridegroom-elect in battle (1676). The great war between Louis XIV and the Emperor then dominated German life and politics. Most of the young princes were to be found at the head of regiments in the field, and the ruling families paid a heavy toll in life.

Fresh suitors, however, were not slow in appearing and alarm prevailed at Osnabrück lest bride and dowry should be consigned, perhaps, to George of Denmark, the same who afterwards became the husband of Anne of England, or perhaps to the young Prince Henry Casimir of Nassau, while Antony Ulric hoped to secure her for his second son, then a child of five. George William, however, would make no engagement, for he had a new scheme for the advancement of his daughter, together with the satisfaction of the family. He wanted Sophia Dorothea to be a reigning duchess; he longed to keep her near himself and her own home of Celle, but

he wanted also to please his brother, and that brother had revealed a repugnance to allowing the splendid dowry to go to the kinsmen of Wolfenbüttel, whom he always regarded with covert suspicion. No marriage had yet been arranged for Ernest Augustus's heir, George Louis, for, though he had been sent on an experimental visit to England, either the royal family had not taken to him or he himself had not felt attracted, for the hand of the Princess Anne had not been offered. If the two cousins, thought George William, were to wed each other it would seem that everyone should be gratified, especially as John Frederick, at Hanover, had no sons, and upon his decease Ernest Augustus, and, after him, George, would become reigning Duke of Hanover,[1] besides succeeding eventually to Celle. By marrying her cousin Sophia Dorothea would thus become hereditary princess in both portions of the duchy, and, no doubt, would be in a position in the future to protect her mother in her accustomed home. It seemed a splendid and a happy prospect.

Though Sophia Dorothea was but eleven years old, her father began negotiations at once, and despatched a special envoy to Osnabrück, then the home of Ernest Augustus, and of George, now sixteen. But the suggestion met with so cold a reception as should have warned the Duke of Celle to relinquish the scheme. The two young people themselves were much averse to the idea. Tears were shed; perhaps tears came readily to the petted little heiress, but the other family derided them. "I think the laughs and tears of [George and Sophia Dorothea] will be settled according to their parents' will and circumstances," the Elector Palatine replied to his sister's description, while Sophia's favourite

[1] The titles Duke of Hanover and Duke of Celle are used in these chapters, though not strictly accurately, in accordance with common English usage, for the sake of clearness.

niece and correspondent, the Duchess of Orleans,[1] had nothing but vehement abuse for the proposition, which her aunt reported to her. No more was said on the subject for some time, to the relief of the Duchess Sophia, who was strongly against the scheme, and no doubt to that of the jealous Antony Ulric at Wolfenbüttel. But the Duke of Celle nursed his idea obstinately, in spite both of the repulse from Osnabrück and of his wife's opposition. As usual, he was the more bent upon the plan the more impossible it seemed, and he was but waiting for a good opportunity to return to the attack, and to intimate that a handsome subsidy would be offered to Ernest Augustus himself.

The occasion came when, in 1679, Ernest Augustus set off on a pleasure trip to Venice, still the centre of fashionable dissipation, while his wife took their only daughter to visit the court of France. Venice, where the two dukes had so often enjoyed themselves together, might be expected to soften the heart of Ernest Augustus towards his elder brother, and the trip proved terribly expensive. George William made his proposition at the right moment, and the dismayed Duchess Sophia found that her husband was actually leaning to the notion of the match with "little Miss Sophie of Celle," and saying that he thought himself likely to die soon, and felt anxious about the prospects of his poor, unprovided-for children. It appears to have been the first and last time he felt anxiety in this respect; what he meant was that he was in great need of money, and that his brother, in his desire for this alliance, had offered him so large a sum as outweighed other considerations. Prince George, however, was now a young man, and had to be bought over as well. He was unwilling to

[1] Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter of the Elector Palatine, had been compelled to adopt the Roman Catholic creed and marry the Duke of Orleans, brother to Louis XIV.

take the bride offered to him, and made difficulties which would have to be smoothed away with yet more money. "The lord has need of her!" the duke profanely ejaculated to his wife, and all the Duchess Sophia could do, in her dislike of the match, was to urge her husband still to ask for more, till the Duke of Celle, unable to see his way to satisfy such extravagant demands, began to draw back a little. A few months later, however, Duke John Frederick died at Hanover, and Ernest Augustus and Sophia were his heirs. With a haste hardly decent towards the dead Duke's widow[1] they at once left the hilly prospects of leafy Osnabrück for the monotonous plains of Hanover, eager to assume the sovereignty over that flourishing duchy and the valuable mines of the Harz, which went some way towards replenishing the exchequer of Ernest Augustus. This inheritance rendered the position of the younger duke at least as good as that of his elder brother, and the Duke of Celle's zeal was stimulated to fresh energy by the thought of what his daughter's position might be. His loyal Estates, which met duly at Celle with as much propriety as an English Parliament, took the same view, and helped to win over Ernest Augustus by announcing that if their little lady married her cousin, the heir, they would willingly agree to his plan for consolidating the duchies in one, and would besides furnish a considerable sum of money. The Estates of Calenberg similarly urged the marriage, and also promised to recognize, on that consideration, the decree of primogeniture. Thus was the unwilling bridegroom purchased with hard cash after a fashion the opposite to that of ancient barbarians. "The boy is averse from the marriage" (wrote his mother, making the best of it), "and we to the alliance with d'Olbreuse, although Miss Hyde came of no better family," but if they would offer 80,000 crowns a year, perhaps he

[1] According to the Duchess of Orleans.

might "gâter les yeux" for that. She felt she must make excuses for her son's condescension, and reminded her family that it was the easier to bear after the Prince of Orange's example (in marrying Princess Mary, Anne Hyde's daughter!). It was a "very bitter pill to swallow, but if it is gilded with 100,000 crowns a year in our full control we may shut our eyes to take it."

So the Duke of Celle agreed to pay the heavy sum of 150,000 thaler, or £30,000 of contemporary English money,[1] not to his daughter but to her father-in-law, besides a yearly income of 50,000 thaler or £10,000 more for six years to come. This was distinct from the princess's handsome dowry, which was to be handed over absolutely to Prince George, without the reserve of anything for herself, so that for her dress and purchases, her attendants and horses she would be wholly dependent upon her husband, and to him, whenever the Duchess Eleonora died, all her lands and revenues were, in like manner, to fall. Even so, George resented being hampered with a girl he disliked. "He did not like it, but the money tempted him as it would anybody else," his mother wrote. "No Frenchwoman!" had been his one stipulation when he understood that it was necessary to permit a marriage to be arranged for him, for though he, of course, spoke French and dressed in the French style, as was inevitable in any German court, he had few or none of the French tastes and sympathies of his father and uncle. Yet in all Germany it might have been hard to find a princess whose upbringing had been more completely French. French was her natural speech. Her father prided himself on his Parisian, or rather, Versailles tastes, and his French plays and operas. The permanent court at Celle, one of the most polished and agreeable in Germany, was almost entirely composed of French

[1] According to the calculation of the English envoy Cressett "500 crowns of their money makes £100 sterling."

nobles, one of whom had the impudence, on one occasion, to remark to the duke that he himself was "the only foreigner" present! He was but a little more "advanced" than the rest of the petty sovereigns within the Empire, who all endeavoured to copy the example of Louis XIV at home, however they might struggle against his policy or his troops. Thus Sophia Dorothea's manners were French, her gaiety and wit, her changeable, perhaps rather superficial feelings, her accomplishments and fastidiousness. It would be much if George did not actually resent a liveliness and love of amusement so unlike his own ways, for he was the last man in the world to make allowance for the inevitable mistakes and follies of a girl of sixteen, by whose acknowledged beauty and charm he was absolutely untouched.

George was indeed hardly the kind of husband a thoughtful parent would have chosen for his daughter in any case. He had, certainly, some of the merits of a soldier—courage, reserve, tranquillity, an iron resolution, a contempt for gaiety—but those merits only. He was as wholly selfish as his father, without a spark of that old Duke's geniality or courteous charm, "ordinarily neither cheerful nor friendly," as his plain-spoken cousin, the Duchess of Orleans, described him, but "dry and crabbed . . . his words had to be squeezed out of him": "it is suspicion, pride and parsimony which make him what he is," for "he has no natural good-heartedness." Worst of all, he was coarsely sensual, and capable, when roused, of a hard implacability. The last trait was, no doubt, only revealed in later years, but every one knew him to have an avowed *liaison* with one of the Court ladies, the Frau von Busseche already named, and to be not insensible to other similar attractions. His power of drinking deep without suffering much from his excesses was probably accounted as, at least, no demerit, but the

unpleasant temper of the prince is hinted at in the Duchess of Orleans' indignant complaint that it was too bad of him to entice the young "Rau-graf" Charles, his cousin, into habitual excesses of drunkenness which threatened to be his ruin. It is difficult to feel anything but amazement at the blindness which persisted in uniting to such a man a young girl so tenderly brought up as Sophia Dorothea, and transplanting her to a Court where licence was tempered by nothing but etiquette, where her mother-in-law was strongly averse from receiving her, and her husband and father-in-law were under the sway of an unscrupulous pair of sisters.

Sophia Dorothea was unhappy when bidden to accept such a husband. The romances assert that she fainted at the sight of him, but she was certainly acquainted with him already. Her mother, with more knowledge than her daughter and with far more insight than her husband, was deeply distressed, but unhappily her influence with the duke of Celle, hitherto so strong, was at this crisis powerless. It almost seems as if, when once he had reached the goal of so many years' endeavour, and won for his wife an acknowledged position, he had ceased to feel the old, strong interest in her desires, and had become possessed, as with a craze, by his new scheme. There was another influence at work, moreover. Bernstorff, the rising minister at Celle, was intent upon making himself necessary to the future sovereign of Celle and Hanover, George. He encouraged the duke's marriage scheme in every way, and thwarted Eleonora's efforts. George William placed much reliance upon Bernstorff, and, as he grew older, the early habit of relying upon Ernest Augustus, which had been in abeyance for many years owing to the ill-feeling about Eleonora, began to re-assert itself.

Thus the Duchess of Celle was obliged to give way, much as Sophia was also obliged to give way to her

husband's will. The settlement of the question was regarded as a sort of victory on the part of Ernest Augustus and Eleonora was rewarded by being formally accosted as *Duchess* by the court of Hanover, which had hitherto affected a more invincible coyness about her title than had the courts of Paris and Vienna.

After nearly two years of bargaining, the Duke and Duchess of Celle went to Hanover on a state visit, in the summer of 1682, to settle the terms of the marriage contract. Count Platen, the minister of Ernest Augustus, drew up his master's formal proposal, and in September George William and his minister, Bernstorff, agreed to it. The final details seem to have been arranged by the two duchesses, each overborne by her determined husband; one full of sad presentiments, the other of resentful indignation. But they did not permit their feelings to appear. The Duchess of Celle professed the greatest pleasure at her daughter's remarkable good fortune; the Duchess of Hanover even rose from her bed thrice in one night to press fresh arguments upon her sister-in-law. For a brief moment the marriage seemed to assume a wider political importance, for, strangely enough, the two great rivals of the European war, Louis XIV and William of Orange, each had advised its conclusion. Louis had been led to suppose that through the princess of Celle French influence might be brought to bear at Hanover, hitherto imperialist in sympathy. William, who knew the Duke of Celle to be one of his firmest friends and allies, was anxious to bring him into fuller harmony with Ernest Augustus, believing that the political position of the dukes would then be stronger, to the benefit of the Protestant alliance against France.

The one person who was completely satisfied by the marriage was, indeed, the Duke of Hanover, for he reaped most of the advantage. He was put into the best of spirits by the large sums of money paid by Celle into

the Hanover exchequer, which enabled him to gratify his lavish tastes and secure popularity among the citizens of his capital.

He at once set his architect to build a range of magnificent stables and a choice new hunting-box in the country, and ordered large reservoirs to be constructed at Herrenhausen to provide for fountains like those at Versailles. No less a personage than the learned Leibniz watched over the creation of these splendid playthings, which are still set in action sometimes for the pleasure of the good folk of Hanover, since the duke's costly toys have been more permanent than his political structure. Besides these works of dignified pleasure, the duke also gave a quite exceptional order to his chamberlain for the annual consignment of robes and patterns from Paris. This provision for the ducal wardrobe was always a very serious matter, over which the chamberlain had to consult the diplomatic representative of Hanover in the French capital. At the beginning of the winter they used to procure a stock of costumes and wigs with all the latest novelties in patterns and ornaments, sufficient for the requirements of the Duke and Duchess and their suites during Christmastide and Carnival—seasons which the court of Hanover was wont to prolong into one brilliant round of gaiety. Paris fashions, it seems, had to be followed very closely just then. Styles were altering rapidly and becoming more elegant; the cocked hat set upon the elegant peruke was all the fashion.

This special order was no doubt in preparation for the coming espousals, for to celebrate a court wedding without attiring the ducal household in completely new clothing would be regarded as an intentional insult to the bride, in days when splendour of costume was almost an index of courtesy. Nevertheless, there is something rather grotesque in the notion of the husband's family

thus provided with wedding outfits at the expense of the bride's dowry.

Although the preliminaries to the marriage appear to have been determined early in the summer of 1682, it was not until October that the final and binding contract was signed, and not until 21st November (O.S.) that the actual ceremony was performed at Celle. The Prince of Hanover went to meet his girl-bride—she was but sixteen—in very ill-humour, for it had been insisted that Frau von Bussche must positively leave Hanover, at least for a time, and he hardly brooked thus much concession to propriety.

The wedding took place with extreme quietness. It was celebrated, not in the lovely little chapel of the castle, but privately in the Princess's apartment in the evening after supper, with no witnesses save her parents and a few high state officials. Next day a little opera was performed, and on the following evening there was a show of fireworks. It was not till ten days later that the Prince and Princess of Hanover made their state journey of 30 (English) miles and were conducted into the capital with the pomp the Duke loved, escorted by a regiment of cavalry and an elaborate procession of trumpeters and pages, officers and ministers, the ducal family in their state coaches, Countess Platen, as usual, conspicuous alone in her special equipage. But Sophia Dorothea had brought only three ladies to attend upon her, all of them so plain, wrote the Duchess severely, that her daughter-in-law never need be jealous on account of them.

It was to an even livelier court than her father's that the young Princess was brought, and her love of amusement, at all events, must usually have been gratified. The city of Hanover was larger and wealthier than little Celle, and a favourite resort of strangers, whether merchants on business or nobles on tour in search of plea-

sure, as was not unusual then, when princely and noble families formed an almost cosmopolitan caste and national jealousies hardly existed amongst them. In Hanover, which had never been devastated by the Thirty Years' War, and had now for some time been the capital of wealthy dukes, excellent quarters could always be found, whether in the dignified old mansions which survived from an earlier time, or in the more modern houses in the fine new streets which Duke Ernest Augustus himself helped to plan. The noble families of the duchy had their town houses in the capital and regularly attended the Duke's court. Sophia Dorothea's impressions of the city over which she must hope, in time, to reign, must have been of a prosperous and handsome place. Its streets were broader than was generally the case in the older German towns, and imposing with their stepped or highly pointed gable fronts and carven signs, their large expanse of red-tiled roofs and here and there a tilted spire, while in front of the spacious market hall and the noble church bequeathed by patriotic merchants of old, there was usually a busy crowd of gaily-dressed citizens with their daughters decked in ribbons of all the colours of the rainbow, "like Indian peacocks." Every man's rank was supposed to be indicated by his costume, but so proud were the good folk becoming that ducal edicts were shortly issued to bid the women lower the height of their head-dresses, and remind citizens that it was against the law for them to wear silk or silver, or carry a sword in the belt, like gentlemen, unless some expedition outside the walls rendered it necessary for self-defence.

The city was a very well ordered place, and the Duke had little to complain of in his subjects save that at weddings and funerals they affected too much extravagance, and even dressed their servants in gorgeous coats and frizzled wigs. They were but aping their Duke a little too

closely, perhaps. His handsome palace stood on the very edge of the crowded streets, unfortified and open to view, emphatically of the city and not apart from it, on the bank of the swiftly flowing Leine, which carried a breath of keen freshness beneath the balconies of the wealthy merchants' homes and the rows of flat windows along the palace front.

One of the finest of those ornate city mansions, in the middle of the mercantile quarter, was the home of Leibniz, the learned favourite, *fac-totum* and star of the ducal court. He wrote a pretty set of verses to the young Princess on her marriage, for he was as complete a courtier as philosopher, but he was not a person who interested her at all, and she never in her life would pay attention to anything she did not happen to fancy. Of learning, as of statesmanship, she took not the least heed, and the great Leibniz, who lived to be the friend not only of Sophia Dorothea's sister-in-law, but of her daughter-in-law Caroline, found it useless to bestow much notice upon the frivolous Princess.

Just behind the ducal palace on the Leine stood the old palace, which was partly rebuilt and refitted for the use of the Prince and Princess; but it seems that Sophia Dorothea usually occupied a suite of rooms in the Leine Palace, an obviously sensible arrangement, as her husband was often away on campaign for long periods. She did not, at any rate, lack amusement. There was Italian opera and French comedy, there were balls and banquets, and fashionable visitors and foreign envoys were continually visiting the court. The Duke was particularly fond of his theatre, and had been enabled, by his new revenue, to organize a private ducal troupe of actors, which was placed under the control of no less a person than the first minister, Count Platen himself. It is impossible to imagine in England Lord Somers or Sir Robert Walpole managing a stage company; but in the con-

tinental courts of that time, modelled upon the pattern of Versailles, there was little distinction between the public and personal interests of the sovereign, or rather, all was personal, and the ruler's pleasures and domestic arrangements were as much matters of state as his foreign policy. So, with no sense of incongruity, Leibniz was set to devise waterworks, and the diplomatic agent reported upon the style of Parisian perukes, and Count Platen drew up a solemn criticism on the actors exactly like a state report:—

"Mons. de Préfleury: very good for kings and fathers and queer characters. His tendency to get tipsy is a hindrance to his study of new parts. . . . Madame A. cannot be understood because she is so old she has lost all her teeth." The *prima donna*, "though very good at lovemaking is so obstinate she cannot be managed and must be dismissed if any system is to be obtained."

The performances in the court theatre and in the ducal opera-house were all given at the expense of the Duke, who permitted the better class of townsfolk, "the canaille," as his secretary not very politely termed them, to witness the performances. No wonder he was popular among the burghers. Nor was the palace the only centre of gaiety in the city. The Town Council itself sometimes gave entertainments in the spacious Guild Hall, which the ducal family would honour by their presence; and hard by on the square of the Wood-market Countess Platen kept her own little court; and as she had, thanks to the Duke, the command of extremely lavish resources, far exceeding those of the Duchess, she took care to make herself popular among the young gallants by constant entertainments, and under her auspices play was higher and etiquette looser than in the palace, and morals still less respected.

The court, however, was by no means habitually

stationary in Hanover. During the summer half of the year the long line of coaches was frequently on the road, either to convey the whole establishment, in a procession of some eighty coaches and wagons, each drawn by four or even eight horses, to one of the Duke's palatial hunting-boxes, or else to conduct the ducal family to that country palace which was their favourite home, whose name became soon as well known to the English as Hampton Court itself—Herrenhausen. This country seat lay hardly more than a mile from the city, among green meadows, where the Duke and Duchess were transforming a few small farms into a stately royal residence with gardens, forcing houses, and pavilions. A new road was made and planted with an avenue of limes a mile long, to lead up to the gates, and on the avenue stood the summer residence of Countess Platen, "Monplaisir," for when the Duke went to the country she went too, still to take the lead in the round of vicious pleasures from which the Duchess Sophia, for every reason, held aloof. The Countess would dash along the straight road in almost as much state as the Duke himself (whose *cortège* she frequently led); and her coach, drawn, like his, by eight horses, with red velvet trappings and red silk twisted reins, and attended by her footmen dressed in crimson cloth with big silver buttons, was as familiar a sight to the people of Hanover as the ducal red and blue liveries.

Countess Platen must in any case have occupied a prominent position, being chief Lady of the Robes to the Duchess, and wife of the permanent first minister, and she was, to the end of his life, all-powerful with Duke Ernest-Augustus. To extend her influence to the next heir was naturally a principal aim of this unscrupulous woman, and she was wrath at the temporary exile of her sister, whom Prince George soon forgot. Later on she was able to instigate in him a considerable affection for

her daughter, the famous Frau von Kielmannsegg,[1] afterwards Countess of Darlington, and in her daughter-in-law, the younger Countess Platen; yet at the moment the arrival of Sophia Dorothea seemed to menace her future security. Her own elderly and solid appearance, much be-painted and be-jewelled, contrasted ill with the graceful figure and rippling light brown hair, the oval face dimpled at the chin, and exquisite complexion of the lovely girl from Celle. Very lively and charming the English envoy, Sir William Colt, found the Princess when she assisted the Duchess Sophia to receive his complimentary visit. She was of a middle height, light and lithe, and she danced charmingly. Lively in temperament, and never as yet afraid of anything, she struck visitors to the court as well-educated and even accomplished. A man, they said, who knew as much as she did would be thought very well informed. She could play on the harpsichord and sing by no means ill, and her conversation was ready and discriminating, though more imaginative and witty than the perhaps rather heavy family was accustomed to.

At the time when this description was penned by a French visitor, the young Princess had been married about two years. Her son George had been born in October, 1683, and she and her little boy, the future heir to the duchy, were quite in the Duke's good graces. To do him justice, when Ernest Augustus resolved to make her his daughter-in-law, he buried his former resentments; he was a man of the world, he hated discomfort and discord, and he was pleased by the Princess's beauty and lightheartedness. But it was not so with the Duchess. "My son's wife arrived on Tuesday," she wrote in some depression, just after the state entry had been accomplished. "And the Duke says that 'sufficient to the day

[1] Ernest Augustus permitted this, his illegitimate child, to bear the same name, Sophia Charlotte, as his only legitimate daughter.

is the sorrow thereof'; if I too could get it out of my mind I should be glad, for it is no use to go on repining."

Sophia early discovered that her daughter-in-law was not altogether truthful; she did not believe in her smiles and tears, she said, and thought her a bad influence on the Princess Sophia Charlotte. Nor was it in the nature of things that the Duchess and her young daughter-in-law should be able to sympathize. The Duchess was a dignified, high-minded, and extremely intellectual princess, who took the keenest interest in European politics and in science and philosophy, for none of which Sophia Dorothea cared in the least. The Duchess had been passionately admired (she says) by her husband during their early married life, but had had to bear, first, with his causeless jealousy, and then, for long years, with his infidelity. But her sense of dignity, as well as her philosophy, taught her to ignore what she could not help and to tolerate her husband's mistress at the head of her own court.

But it would have been unreasonable to expect the same rather cold philosophy of an impetuous girl accustomed to think herself of considerable importance. To her the Duchess's equanimity beneath domestic insult seemed disgraceful apathy, and the prominence of Countess Platen an outrage upon her own right to be the second lady of the court, for she found herself very decidedly only the third.

The Duchess, again, was happily able to find consolation and interest in the careers of a troop of children and in intercourse with some of the first minds of the age, while an admiring esteem was laid at her feet by all save her husband and sons—by kinsfolk, crowned heads, and the whole world of polite learning, English and German.

Poor Sophia Dorothea, a mother at seventeen, without any intellectual tastes, missing the fond indulgence of

her parents and the court of Celle, and feeling herself slighted by the ducal family at Hanover, could find interests, it is to be feared, only in dress and jewels, in extravagant almsgiving, purchases, or play; or in the comedies, operas, and dances of which the court were so fond, and in mild flirtation with such young noblemen as were not yet too worldly-wise to allow themselves to be attracted by the loveliness of the Princess of Hanover.

Probably for a few years she was not seriously unhappy, for she was exceedingly lively and fond of gaiety, and of this, at all events, the Hanoverian court offered plenty. The Duke's fêtes were becoming yearly more magnificent, and were considered distinguished enough to be reported in the fashionable Paris newspaper, the "Mercure Galant," which was patronized by royalty. It printed, for instance, a laudatory account of the delightful festivities which celebrated the betrothal of the Princess Sophia Charlotte to the Electoral Prince of Brandenburg (afterwards King Frederick William of Prussia), for it was worthy of recognition, said the reporter, that this cultivated German court had not only adopted French manners, but French amusements. Accordingly a *ballet*, then the latest novelty at the Court of Versailles, was danced by young princes and nobles costumed as cupids or Indians. Young Baroness Platen danced a "gigue" and chanted a recitativo, Baron Platen and the two Grotes appeared as Indian princes. Dressing up, in fact, was quite a serious performance, and the Paris paper recorded it in full when the Duke gave a masquerade and the court drew lots for characters. The Duchess was lucky, or wise, enough to secure the part of a "lady of Ancient Times"; but the Duke appeared as Harlequin, the Prince as a "Scaramouch," Princess Sophia Dorothea and the betrothed Charlotte as Turks, and Countess Platen as a lawyer. It was summer, and

as soon as the afternoon got cool enough, the whole surprising company set off in coaches or on horseback through the streets of Hanover and along the road to Herrenhausen, and there played merry pranks in the grounds till it was nearly supper-time. Then they dashed back to the palace and supped, and danced afterwards till five o'clock next morning. As for Princess Charlotte's wedding, which took place in the October of 1684, it was signalized by all the splendour of which Sophia Dorothea's had been curtailed. "Magnificence was ever combined with correctness, and everything was as refined as it was sumptuous," wrote the appreciative "special correspondent."

On this occasion there were brilliant festivities for a week; displays military and musical, balls and suppers, and a curious torch dance, a national custom of the duchy, in which the princes and princesses and the most important personages of the court danced in couples, hand in hand, each carrying a six-foot lighted torch. Sophia Dorothea and Charlotte each bore one of these and danced through the figures for two hours on end. They were a lighthearted and youthful family then, the brother princes (all save the sullen-tempered eldest), and the two charming princesses, and they fell to dancing on every opportunity. Once the Duchess desired a young nobleman to entertain a visitor by dancing some elaborate *pas seuls* in which he was very agile. The princesses at once wanted to dance with him, and did so in turns, till the whole company caught the spirit of the thing and began dancing about in the Duchess's own apartment till they betook themselves to a roomier place and kept up an impromptu ball. They would sometimes dance from six o'clock till ten, and then, having supped, begin again and go on through nearly the whole of the night; and this in addition to concerts and comedies perhaps daily for a week together.

These volatile amusements seem to have been the staple occupations of Sophia Dorothea's life during the first years at Hanover; but there would certainly come a time when mere dissipation would pall, and then might come danger. For the present, however, the principal signs of disagreement between the Princess and the family into which she had married were to be found in minor, but irritating, matters. Sophia Dorothea was impatient of the extreme punctiliousness of her mother-in-law's etiquette, and was apt to pay too little attention to its details save when she could assert her own precedence, which became very tiresome when, for instance, the elderly Princess of East-Friesland, visiting the Duchess, found her place disputed by Sophia Dorothea.[1] She made a tremendous fuss sometimes about her brother-in-law, Prince Max. He was the most self-assertive of the family, and quite the most foolish, and had expressed his admiration of his sister-in-law too pressingly for propriety or for her own liking. In consequence she behaved rather prudishly to him for years. The Duke himself would be appealed to on such an important matter as Sophia Dorothea's apartments in the country palace to which the court adjourned for the hunting season. For a good many years, in fact, she knew she was safe in appealing to his indulgence; the birth of her son, George, had proved a passport to his good graces, and he evinced much fondness for the little grandson, but whether his partiality for his daughter-in-law and the excellent terms on which she was with the younger princes appeared any merit in the eyes of her husband and mother-in-law may be doubted.

So much pleased was Ernest-Augustus with his daughter-in-law that when, in the winter of 1685, he made his last expedition of pleasure to Italy, he sent from

[1] Both Hanover and Prussia hoped to secure the reversion of East-Friesland, and it was desirable to conciliate the dowager princess and regent.

Venice back to Hanover for her to come out to join in the gaity, with the Platen and von Bussche families, who as usual accompanied him on his tour of amusement. The Duchess stayed at home.

Perhaps no worse an example could have been displayed to the young princess than the brilliant licence of the pleasure-cities of Europe, the homes of a perpetual dissipation where almost as much freedom was permitted to ladies as to gentlemen, and where vice was so far recognized as the ordinary custom, that even those who themselves were not immoral adopted the manners and language of improper gallantry. The distinguished visitors from Hanover were entertained with the greatest brilliance in Venice and Verona, and moved on for Christmas to Rome, which was even more dissolute than Venice.

The incessant revels must have been a strange experience for so young a woman (she was not yet twenty), who had never before been separated from her natural guardians, but was now so far away from any counsel or restraint. She certainly could not reckon on much fatherly feeling from the Duke, ready as he was to spend money and let her do as she liked. At this very time, when he was squandering great sums (the marriage money from Celle) in Italian dissipation, he had just driven his second son from home almost penniless—"Poor Gus is turned out; his father will give him no more keep," the Duchess had written to her friend. The fact was that when the Duke (in 1682) announced his intention of establishing the rule of primogeniture in all his dominions, a kind of family schism had taken place. The younger sons were, not unnaturally, furious at their father's refusal to make any kind of provision for them, and though their mother could not but sympathize with them, she was powerless to help them save by small subsidies from her own not very abundant supplies. In conse-

quence, Augustus, the second son, firmly refused to promise obedience to the new decree establishing primogeniture, and had betaken himself to Wolfenbüttel to get the advice of Antony Ulric, the Duke who would have been Sophia Dorothea's father-in-law but for the fatal siege of Philippsburg. Antony Ulric was always ready with a warm welcome for malcontents from the rival family, and he sustained the young prince's conviction that a new rule of succession could not be established by the will of the Duke alone. But Augustus had still too much respect for his father to set about any serious measures of resistance, and the Duke was easily able to exert his superior power. He ordered his son to quit his dominions and find a living for himself in one of the Emperor's armies, where the incessant war against the Turks was always creating gaps which must be filled up. The son of one of the wealthiest sovereigns in Germany had to pursue the career of a subordinate officer on a par with the sons of penniless nobles. His unhappy mother was powerless to remonstrate or to help, and though she wept over it through the nights, she says, she was prudent enough to treat it as a joke during the day. This was the first of the family catastrophes in which the interests of the children clashed with the hard egoism of their father, and went under.

While the Duke was enjoying himself without a thought for his cast-off son, and without providing any safer chaperonage than Countess Platen's for his youthful daughter-in-law, her husband reached Italy to take a respite from his command of the Emperor's troops in the East. It was a year since he had seen his wife, but when he learned that the party had gone to Rome, he declined to follow them thither, and stayed to amuse himself alone in Venice and Northern Italy. Long after, when Sophia Dorothea was helpless in prison, a French nobleman of infamous character published his reminiscences, and

boasted therein of the improper favours which, he averred, she had bestowed upon him in Rome. It is certain that his assertions were cowardly lies. No suspicion had yet overshadowed the Princess, nor was her conduct in Italy ever described as worse than volatile, even if it may be supposed likely that so young and lively a girl, without any advice save from a bad and hardened woman or from her own devoted, but inexperienced, friend, Fräulein von dem Knesebeck, may have committed a few indiscretions in the dissolute Papal capital. It is to the husband in Venice, whose proceedings were shrouded, very wisely, in darkness, that condemnation must attach.

When, after nearly a year's sojourn in Italy, the party returned home, the relations between the Princess and her husband's family appear to have become somewhat strained. The Prince had returned to the war without caring to see his wife, and when he came home again (in 1686) he was the openly declared lover of Melusina von der Schulenburg, a quiet and rather dull maid of honour to the Duchess. "Look at that Mawkin," the Duchess once observed to an English lady, Mrs. Howard, "and think of her being my son's passion!" There was, of course, no secrecy about the Prince's attachment; it was, indeed, counted quite an honour to be his mistress, and special apartments began to be reserved for Mademoiselle Schulenburg (French titles were commonly in use) who was accorded a recognized precedence among the court ladies. Sophia Dorothea, however, bitterly resented her husband's conduct, nor did the birth of their second child, named Sophia Dorothea, after its mother, tend in the least to reconcile the estranged couple. It seems to have been about this time that the decorum and comfort of the family began to be endangered by the petulant conduct of Sophia Dorothea, who took a view of her own and her husband's relations much more in accordance

with modern feeling than with the custom of her contemporaries. To the members of the Duke's family who, after all, were only adopting the ordinary ways of European courts at that epoch, her indignant complaints seemed absurd or actually unseemly. The Duchess of Orleans could hardly express her amazement at the Princess's arrogance. The heads of the family must have considered her a firebrand. She provoked unpleasant scenes; she lashed her sullen husband with sarcasms; regardless of dignity or prudence, she vented her contempt of his commonplace mistresses in gibes and sneers, and made an enemy of Count Platen and of his powerful wife, whom she certainly regarded as the instigator of her humiliation. No one was on her side but her brothers-in-law, who disliked "the Platen," and were not over friendly with the selfish hereditary Prince. But their sympathy was more likely to injure her position than to strengthen it.

These family jars, however, did not penetrate to the public ear, for to outsiders Sophia Dorothea was still the most attractive personage at court, and she probably took a malicious pleasure in upsetting the equanimity of the Duchess's favourite nephew, the "Rau-graf" Charles.[1] This gentleman was quite sufficiently brazen, yet when he met his death on one of the bloody battlefields of Hungary, the rancorous Henrietta of Orleans actually sought to comfort her aunt by assuring her that she considered Sophia Dorothea to be morally responsible for it. She had set her cap at him so determinedly that the modest youth had fled to the wars to escape her pertinacity! No charge was too absurd for the Duchess of Orleans to hurl at her cousin in the belief that it would by no means displease the Duchess Sophia, and this particular assertion may be easily discounted, for the

[1] Illegitimate son of the Elector Palatine.

Duchess of Orleans herself, to another correspondent, asserted that his ruin was really brought about by Prince George, who induced him to drink himself stupid, having a good hard toper's head himself.

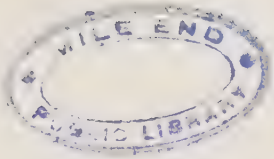
This year, 1688, was one of especial splendour in the court of Hanover. Thanks to his daughter-in-law, the Duke was still well furnished with money. He had finished his palace and was building in front of it a stone bridge over the river, and a street of handsome new houses; the new stables were splendidly stocked with some six hundred horses, for he kept no less than twenty span of eight, or six, horses to draw the state coaches, and this without counting the establishment of Prince George, who had a considerable retinue of his own. The new Italian opera-house was finished too, with its triple set of seats for court, nobility, and citizens, and to conduct in it the Duke had secured a famous musician from Munich whose performances soon outshone even those of Vienna. It was opened at the Carnival, this year one of the Duke's most splendid celebrations. The winter revels at Hanover were now wont to begin in December and continue until Easter under the general name of Carnival, with scarcely an intermission, unless when the gay company betook themselves to Brunswick Fair, when the Dukes of Hanover and Celle used to hold a family reunion with their Wolfenbüttel cousins. The festivities of Hanover had become so famous that great and wealthy personages made a practice of visiting the gay city to share in them, especially in February, the gayest month of all. This the Duke considered a compliment, and he established a regular ceremonial for the arrival of princely visitors. They were met by the Duke's carriages and horses, and conducted into the town by a guard of honour with trumpets blowing. Their servants would be lodged in the city and they and their noble officers in the palace, unless they preferred to be nominally "incognito" and

take private lodging for themselves. Etiquette was, of course, scrupulously observed. Arm-chairs were only allowed to ruling sovereigns and crown-princes and their wives, the rest of the royalties sat upon stools, while the nobles would stand. Indeed the elaborate ceremonial of the court was considered a model by the rest of Germany. The Duke's politics might be German, said admiring observers, his life was entirely French. Only the serious English envoys were dreadfully bored by ceremonial and festivities alike.

During the season of festival there was a daily and nightly succession of feasting, dancing, and gambling, of comedies and operas and, most delightful of all, masquerades exactly like those of Venice, when disguises and masks abolished etiquette and cloaked a liberty which sometimes became licence, in spite of the denunciatory sermons of the town pastors. These saw with dismay the revels and manners of the court shared by the citizens, and declaimed in vain against the new custom of spreading the Carnival over the whole Lent season and giving the town an almost Italian reputation, so that it was nicknamed "the German Venice."

That sadness or danger menaced some of the riotous company seemed to cast no shadow over their gaiety. Only the Duchess grieved in secret that the fourth and most beloved of her sons, Prince Charles, was now bidden by his father to go and earn his living in the usual dangerous career. When summer came and once more opened the country to campaigning, he was to set off for the imperial service in Hungary. This time the Duke had been good-humoured enough to purchase a commission (as English nobles habitually did for their sons). He had bought the command of a regiment, feeling, as the Duchess expressed it, "quite willing to risk the money it will cost him in order to satisfy my son. He has lost as much at basset before now." The gay and

gallant Prince Charles was now enjoying his last Carnival at home, and to him was apparently due the introduction to the ducal family of a new visitor, a distinguished and wealthy nobleman already known to several European capitals, Count Philip Königsmarck.



CHAPTER II

COUNT KÖNIGSMARCK: 1689-1694

THE Count Philip Christopher von Königsmarck—to give the full German form of his name—was a scion of a well-known Swedish family. In those days nationality, at all events on the continent of Europe sat somewhat lightly on a nobleman, and the young man's training had been cosmopolitan and, of course, military. He was reckoned among the most brilliant men of the time—a time when high rank, profuse expenditure, and a dashing manner gave the entrance to fashionable society everywhere, and when men of this stamp would travel from court to court, and camp to camp, of war-stricken Europe, winning fortune or laurels as chance provided opportunity. Such an one was the famous Prince Eugene, and such had been the grandsire and the uncle of the present Count Königsmarck. His family were possessed of great wealth, acquired during the Thirty Years' War by the grandfather, a Swedish General, and Count Philip inherited not only fortune but striking beauty and a family tradition, perfected by his upbringing, of unhesitating audacity. His manners were those then most approved in great gentlemen, now witty, courteous, gallant—now insolent and brutal. He would gamble and drink with the wildest, make love with the most vehement, or take his place at the head of a regiment in a reasonable number of campaigns and battle-fields. In every country save England, such a

career, halfway between that of the knight-errant and the mercenary, was considered the only natural one for high-spirited young noblemen. The courts of the Emperor and Louis XIV were full of them, and the smaller German sovereigns could count a tolerable proportion of noble Swedes, Danes, or Frenchmen, among their officers and favourites. These men often achieved fortune by sheer audacity or persistency, and the Duchess Sophia felt it incumbent upon her to apologize for the slow advancement of one of her own sons by explaining that he was not clever at pushing himself forward as others did. There was a famous tale of Königsmarck's uncle, which related that when he was sent on an embassy to Louis XIV with a particular set speech to deliver he suddenly forgot what it was he had to say (or, more likely, had been too lazy ever to learn it), but with perfect coolness proceeded to recite to the monarch, with courtly gestures, a portion of the Swedish catechism, to the perfect satisfaction of the French courtiers, none of whom were acquainted with the Swedish tongue. It was characteristic of the family, nothing would disconcert a Königsmarck. That an elder brother of Philip's had been expelled from England after a cowardly murder, which had scandalized even the London of Charles II, would scarcely be likely to damage the young Count's reputation on the continent.

In what costume the brilliant Count Königsmarck presented himself at the final and most splendid masquerade of the Carnival we are not told, but he found Sophia Dorothea resplendent in the crimson robes of a cardinal; and at the supper which succeeded he was placed among those of the foremost rank, on an equality with the French envoy, and admitted to the table of the princes and princesses where Sophia Dorothea, "the Princess of Celle," as the reporter still calls her, for once occupied the principal place, for the dukes and duchesses had consulted

their ease and retired to sup privately in their own apartments.

It was not the first time that the Princess and the Count had seen each other. Years before, when both were children, young Philip had been brought on a visit to the court at Celle, and had played with the pretty little daughter of the castle. The child had not then been raised to princely rank, and Philip's mother had made some overtures for a match between Sophia Dorothea and the elder Königsmarck—the one who was expelled from England. Afterwards, remembering this early acquaintance, Count Philip imagined that his heart had even then been stirred to a deeper than boyish feeling by the beauty and charm which now, in his manhood, rapidly overpowered him. When, in the following year, he returned to pay another visit to Hanover, he was inclined to remain longer, and brought with him his beautiful sister Aurora. Owing to the death of a relative he was now exceedingly wealthy, and travelled with a retinue. The Duke was glad to attach so rich and distinguished a nobleman to his court, and offered him the colonelcy of a regiment, and, as his brother-in-law, General Loewenhaupt, was already in the service of the Duke of Celle, Hanover seemed a suitable place for the brother and sister to settle in. Count Königsmarck entered the Hanoverian service, and in the charming and lovely Aurora the Princess was delighted to find, for the first time in her life, a thoroughly congenial friend. Thus the first connection of the Königsmarcks with the ducal family came about quite naturally, and in Sophia Dorothea's friendship with the two popular young people there was nothing at all remarkable. Probably, in the dances and entertainments which filled so much time at court, the Princess quite naturally "paired" with the Count as the most distinguished nobleman present, after the Duke and his sons, for when the elderly dukes and duchesses did not dance Prince

George would lead out Countess Platen as principal lady, and the principal nobleman present was expected to be the partner of the Princess, unless she danced with one of her brothers-in-law. But in a court where amusement was inseparable from dissipation, friendship had little chance of remaining innocent outside the intellectual circle of the Duchess Sophia. It is possible that the young people may have been left more than usually to their own devices during that anxious year 1689, for the brooding storm of war had broken into a perilous tempest, and, little as he liked it, the Duke had had to pledge himself more definitely to that Grand Alliance organized by William of Orange and the Emperor, to which his brother at Celle was always staunch. Louis XIV was now attacking Germany and Holland, while William had entered England, and both Duke and Duchess were much absorbed in the news from the different seats of war. The consequences of William's sudden acquisition of the crowns of England, Scotland, and Ireland was indeed of immediate concern to all the Hanover house. The probability that neither Mary nor Anne would leave children was already recognized, and William had pointed out that the splendid inheritance might descend to Sophia, as the only scion of the Stewart line who could satisfy the conditions of the Bill of Rights. Thus the House of Hanover became firmly pledged to the Protestant side in the great war, and for once it came easily to Sophia Dorothea to take an interest in politics. Not that Papist or Protestant, Tyranny or Liberty, were much more to her than names; but that, seeing her husband take up a decided position as the ally and friend of William III, under whose orders he fought, she chose, out of a pure spirit of opposition, to show off her own preference for the French side. It was a way, too, of airing her grievances and her discontent. She once had the folly to announce that she wished she were but a

French marquise (it was the original rank of her mother), she would be much happier than as a princess of Hanover. Poor Sophia Dorothea never learned how many truths should be buried in silence, and in her pleasure in her new-found friends she began to confide to Aurora Königsmarck, and to Aurora's brother, far too much of her own unhappiness, and found far too much comfort in the admiration and attentions of Count Philip. But if politics were to the foolish young mother of a future English king merely a means of provoking her family, war very shortly became a present reality. Scarcely a month passed but some Hanoverian regiment was marching to the battlefields of the Netherlands or the Balkan peninsula, and with them went their commanders, the Duke of Hanover himself, with Prince George, Prince Gus and Prince Max, Prince Charles and Count Königsmarck. The two latter set out in the autumn of 1689 for the war against the Turks in the far distant Morea; and the Carnival of 1690 was danced through with many an aching heart, for the dangers of the war in the East, where the Turks were in much greater strength than the imperial troops, were only too well known.

During the early weeks of the Carnival Sir William Colt, the English envoy, was "under dreadful apprehensions that our mirth will not end well"; and in the midst of the merrymaking came the dreadful tidings that a detachment commanded by Prince Charles had been cut off by the Turks, and that the Prince was missing. He was so much beloved both by Duke and Duchess, said Sir William, "that if he be killed it will bring them both with sorrow to their graves; nor, indeed, did I ever see one more generally beloved."[1] Letters told how the Prince's sword had been broken and his horse wounded, but his parents clung to the hope that he might have been taken prisoner, and the Duke sent an express to

[1] Correspondence in the P.R.O.

find out; but it was weeks before certain news could be procured from Constantinople. When there was no longer any doubt that the Prince had been killed on the battlefield, though Königsmarck had escaped, the Duchess broke down with grief, and the court festivals were abruptly stopped by a general mourning.

Probably it was the shock of this suspense which first revealed to Sophia Dorothea the strength of her feeling for Count Königsmarck, for when he returned in April he found an encouraging welcome not only from the Duke, but from the Princess, to whom, by this time, he had become definitely attached.

It was the first time that the heart of the unhappy and rather frivolous Sophia Dorothea had been touched; and the attention which the Count paid her could not but set her coarse, unfaithful husband in a more odious light than before. Königsmarck was not obliged to return to the imperial army, and when the Duke placed him in command of the Guard, he was, of course, constantly at the court. Ernest Augustus was desirous of retaining him at hand, thinking him likely to be useful in the diplomatic contest he was engaged upon with Sweden; and the new colonel was employed for some time in negotiations and military duties of some importance, but of no great danger, which did not take him away for any length of time.

He lived in a street close by the palace, and evidently took full advantage of his frequent opportunities of meeting the Princess, whether as an officer of rank or as the Countess Aurora's brother, and Sophia Dorothea, never so strict as the rest of the ducal family in points of etiquette, was ready to enjoy his conversation and admiration to the full. He seems to have thought that the Duke did not encourage his assiduous attendance upon the Princess, which was very likely, if it was already observed, and this should have given pause to his ardour;

but he was never a man of consideration, and when his employments took him away from Hanover he ventured upon writing to the Princess fervent expressions of his devotion, and besought her to reply to him.

Now, in the mere fact of a mutual correspondence there was nothing at all exceptional. It was an epistolary age. The polite world of Germany, England, and France was enamoured of letter-writing, which was not merely a fashionable accomplishment, but attained to a pitch of literary perfection hardly likely ever to be reached again. The Duchess Sophia herself was continually exchanging voluminous letters of the most intimate nature with a host of relatives, and her more intellectual correspondence with Leibniz is famous. Quantities of private letters still testify to the large place which letter-writing took among the occupations of the upper classes.

That Sophia Dorothea, too, should carry on a correspondence would be in no way remarkable, unless we may suppose that the beginning of a new habit would be likely to attract attention. Königsmarck, however, was neither a relative nor an elderly *savant*, and from the first he took pains to have his letters secretly delivered, and flattered himself that no one knew of them save the Princess's confidential lady in waiting, Mademoiselle Knesebeck. It was to her that the letters were addressed, sometimes in her own name, sometimes under a feigned one,[1] and, feeling secure under this veil, he ventured upon outspoken love-making. "I am now at an extremity," he wrote, in what appears to be the first of his letters preserved, "and there is no means of saving myself excepting by a few lines from your incomparable hand; if I were so happy as to receive some I should at least

[1] For this and what follows see Mrs. Everett Green's copy of the letters preserved (as explained in the Preface to this volume) in the B.M. Add. MS. 28259.

be somewhat consoled: I hope you will not be so uncharitable as to refuse me this favour, since it is you who cause my affliction it is just that you should also be the one to comfort me. None but you can console me for the sorrow caused by this fatal absence. I shall also see thereby whether I may rely upon what you have sometimes had the goodness to say to me. If I were not writing to a person for whom my respect is as great as my love I should find better terms to express my passion, but fearing to offend I must stop short, only entreating you not entirely to forget me, and to believe me to be your slave."

So far the Count's language is hardly to be distinguished from the conventional gallantry of the day, nor did the Princess at once respond to his appeal. Possibly her attitude was still one of mere coquetry. But she sent him some message—probably through Mademoiselle Knesebeck—which emboldened her cavalier to make another entreaty for only "two words" from herself, which would surely cure his malady. On his return to Hanover he did not cease to send letters, which soon became ardent, and to them he was able to add further attentions, whispers in the ball-room or at the play, occasional meetings in the garden, and so forth, but still the Princess did not openly reciprocate the serious passion which her lover felt or professed, and her manner, sometimes cold and disdainful towards himself, sometimes coquettish towards others, threw him into tumults of excitement. After one such crisis he resolves to leave the court, but before he goes writes to complain of the despair into which her conduct throws him, and entreats the opportunity of saying two words to her. This was granted, and the consequence was that the lover postponed his journey until September, when the Hanoverian court left to spend a few days at Brunswick.

Curiously enough, Königsmarck had, just at this early

stage of his love-making, conceived a desire to enter the service of William III, a proceeding which would no doubt have broken off the dangerous intimacy. He liked England, with which he had made acquaintance in earlier years, and thought he should be happy living there, but Duke Ernest Augustus would not lose his brilliant colonel, and put difficulties in the way of his departure to visit William III when the latter was on the Continent. A few weeks later the Count was so passionately in love as to rail at the hard necessity of going even so far as Hamburg, and losing the sight of his lady for a whole week.

So distinguished a personage as Königsmarck could hardly, however, be suffered to devote his attentions, so much coveted, entirely to one divinity, and "the Platen," greedy of everything, was especially keen in the pursuit of a handsome, lively, and wealthy cavalier. She wanted to win his money at cards; she wanted flattery and gallantry; she had a marriageable daughter still unprovided for; above all, she was unable to endure that another, and that other the Princess of Celle, should be openly preferred before herself by a man of distinction. She made overtures to him which Königsmarck lacked honesty or sense to reject, and there is no doubt that a disgraceful understanding for some time subsisted between her and the Count. The Countess indeed made herself ridiculous about the young man to such a point that once (according to Aurora Königsmarck), at a picnic in the woods with the Prince and Princess, she set music playing, and danced about with the Count on the turf in so absurd a style that the Princess "nearly died of laughing."[1]

In all likelihood Königsmarck regarded an intrigue with the powerful favourite as an obvious move in the court game which a carver of his own career was ex-

[1] See Kramer's "Denkwürdigkeiten."

pected to play, but the connection was a dangerous one. Countess Platen was not to be trifled with. She was a vindictive and unscrupulous woman, and Sophia Dorothea had already incurred her displeasure. Her will was supreme with the Duke of Hanover, and her requests were commands. She would never consent to become merely a temporary amusement to a fashionable cavalier, another name to add to his list of conquests. He was risking his own safety, and probably that of the Princess, in giving her an interest in his career. But at first he did not see any inconsistency in playing the lover both to the Duke's mistress and the Prince's wife, and it was to the latter that his genuine devotion was given—in so far as such a man can be said to have possessed any genuine feelings at all.

When, after some hesitation, Sophia Dorothea consented to write to him, the encouragement caused his own outpourings to become the more vehement. "Were you to see me (he writes, when on a journey to the frontier) you would say yourself: Is it possible for a man to be so sad? This is merely the result of this absence. My noble travelling companion could tell you the state in which he sees me daily. I hide the cause from him, as you may well believe. You will not perhaps believe it, but, on the word of a gentleman, I have been many times so beside myself that I thought I should faint." Thinking of her absence gave him such palpitation of the heart that his valet had to recover him with balm.

When the court returned from Brunswick it remained for some weeks at Hanover, "during which time private letters were succeeded by stolen visits." Königsmarck became so bold as to take to himself the right to use reproaches, if he ever thought that his lady-love did not bestow enough attention upon him. This conduct moved her indignation, and was, in turn, atoned for by profound

penitence, all of which so wrought on the Princess that she admitted him to the closest private converse, and frankly confessed her overpowering love for him. Kisses and embraces followed, interviews lasted sometimes far into the night, and the Count became almost intoxicated with rapture. Once, when he was confined to his house by illness, he endeavoured—incredible as such rashness seems—to get her to visit him there. He wrote to tell her what careful arrangements he had made, how the door would stand open, and all servants be out of the way; the visit "will be an infallible remedy to cure me." But there remains no later allusion to prove that such a visit ever took place, and we may be allowed to think that Sophia Dorothea quailed at the last moment.

It is not, however, possible to try to compose an exact narrative out of these famous letters, for those which have been preserved are but a portion of what passed between the lovers. But there is ample evidence of the kind of passion which each entertained for the other: a passion absorbing, egotistic, and unhampered by any sense of duty to others, though the Princess seems to have had a lurking and uneasy sense of wrong-doing. The letters begin in 1691, not long after Königsmarck's appointment as colonel of the Guards, by which time both were being rapidly carried away by the tide of their feelings. Nearly all are written in French, but here and there is a page of German, and Italian expressions occur sometimes. French was the tongue most natural to both correspondents, for even the German letters are profusely scattered with French words, and Sophia Dorothea wrote French fluently and very correctly, whereas Königsmarck's "phonetic" spelling is of a kind which leads one to wonder whether such a pronunciation could have been always readily understood. He writes down, often, the sound of the phrase, misdividing the single words in an amazing manner, and occasionally makes use of terms

so awkward as to suggest that he was not very perfectly possessed of the language he chose to use, at any rate as to the finer shades of meaning. There is the same sort of difference in the style of the lovers. Sophia Dorothea writes both simply and forcibly. It is evident that she tells the exact truth about herself. Her unadorned relation of the round of a day's meals, cards, and calls, does not give an impression of more literal truth than her outspoken asseverations of her love, her anxiety, and her indifference to others. One can perfectly realize the petulant rudeness to relatives, the disobliging curtness to visitors and ambassadors, the days of silence and dogged retirement which perturbed her mother and very probably irritated other people. But she evidently had, as she avowed, only one thought—how to keep her time for thinking of Königsmarck and writing these long letters to him.

The impression conveyed by the Count's letters is less convincing, at all events at first. His effusions seldom seem to ring quite true. They are crammed with wild protestations and high flown metaphors, which seem to come remarkably glibly from so illiterate a man. He wishes he were Perseus to deliver her from her thraldom to Prince George; "for if you really hate him so much as you say you are worse off than I am." If she lives with the Prince as his wife he will die, will kill himself—it will be a speedy and easy death, for the Elbe flows close by the very spot where he is stationed. Or he has flung himself upon his knees, and prayed to God to send him instant death if his ladylove care for him no longer: the signature to this letter was written "Königsmarck" in blood! He is perpetually crying out against his "fate" —the ill-luck which he declares pursues him. "O too cruel Destiny! Oh how Fortune hates me!" "Alas, how Fortune is always adverse to me! yet I will hope that in time she will change and be for me." "If all my blood

would convince you of my eternal constancy I would shed it gladly at every moment you wish it" (*tous les moments*). It is significant, too, that he often protests a disbelief of the Princess's statements. Both were always jealous, but Königsmarck seems sometimes to have chosen to disbelieve what Sophia Dorothea wrote, as if in order to give scope to his own violence. She distrusted him, too, his silence and his omissions were the ground of her jealousy. Did the man know his own protestations to be so much a mere lip-homage that he suspected the same even in the direct and almost naïve self-revelations of the young Princess? There are but very few graceful touches, as when, *e.g.*, he writes to the Princess, then absent from Hanover, that he does not abjure the society of the ladies: there is indeed one lady so like herself that he must frequent her company, and he thinks she likes him, too, but he will not name her for fear of jealousy. The mystery had, however, been solved by a letter from one of the ladies to the Princess, telling her that Count Königsmarck must indeed be bored to play with children—he did nothing but build card houses for little Prince George and the little Princess Sophia Dorothea—this was the "court lady" so like her mother.

But whether or no the earlier sentiments of Königsmarck were anything more than those of a common profligate, there can be little doubt that in the end he became so ardent a lover as to ignore every other consideration. He frequently speaks of their intercourse as "our intrigue," but insists that it "is not like a common intrigue." He possessed, indeed, only the phraseology and ideas of a very coarse man in a very coarse age, and the fact that many of his expressions and anecdotes are absolutely unquotable, to some extent obscures his brutality. None of his epistles forms pleasant reading. That a man so debauched should be held for an orna-

ment of courts, should have become the intimate friend of two of the Duchess Sophia's sons, and then have been so passionately loved by a young princess brought up in the comparatively refined court of Celle, must seem to our judgement little short of astounding. We have to reflect that it is impossible to depict with modern terms a true picture of that strange epoch and that society whose veil of wit and elegance is, by a sort of conventional fiction, always permitted to conceal from our eyes its moral rottenness.

There was nothing sacred about the post of those times, though a fairly regular service was provided in the German states, and it was always possible that a letter might be looked into. In order, therefore, to disguise from any prying eye the nature of their correspondence, the writers, like most others who had matter of importance to write about, devised a sort of cipher. Certain numbers stood for certain names, *e.g.*, 100 was the Duke of Hanover, 102 his brother of Celle. Sometimes a numerical alphabet was used to disguise a few words or names, 22 stood for *a*, 24 for *b*, etc., but this clumsy system was usually too troublesome to be employed for long. They were in too great a hurry to spell out their ardent words, and the bulk of the letters are written almost in full, with no more than nicknames or abbreviations to disguise the dangerous names. Anybody who chose to study two or three of the letters could easily identify, from the allusions, the writers and their position, and understand that *le grondeur* and *le pédagogue* meant the Princess's father and mother, that *le Reformeur* and *la Romaine* were Prince George and the Duchess Sophia, or that such nonsense compositions as *illyhanilly* or *illy herrilly* stood for Hanover and Herrenhausen. The extraordinary childishness of supposing all this to be a mystifying cipher is characteristic of Sophia Dorothea. She, of course, had a fancy name in the correspondence.

She is Léonisse, or sometimes *la cœur gauche*, or *la petite louche*. Königsmarck is *le Cavalier*, and Fräulein von dem Knesebeck *la confidante* or *la sentinelle*.

Sophia Dorothea was timid by nature, indeed Königsmarck sometimes reproached her gently for not venturing more; yet she chose to believe that this flimsy disguise of names and numbers was a safe concealment, and in her letters was outspoken to an extraordinary degree. Yet, though she was open in her avowals, she was much more reticent of action. Doubtless she was at first afraid to give cause of suspicion at court, and she seems to have hesitated before the extreme vehemence of her lover. Therefore, when the court left Hanover for the usual hunting expeditions of autumn, which were, in 1691, conducted from the Duke of Celle's country houses at Eppsdorf and die Göhrde (not far from Hamburg), she did not assent to Königsmarck's wish to come into the same neighbourhood. It was just as well, for the Duchess of Celle had heard of the intimacy between the two (which proves that at least some of the court circle had observed it), and she thoroughly disapproved of it. She held a grave conversation with her daughter on the subject, and earnestly pressed her to break off the connection. Sophia Dorothea was at first impressed by her mother's warnings, and by way of carrying out her good advice, wrote to Königsmarck begging him to marry, that so he might place both himself and her out of temptation, for marriage would, in all probability, have removed him to some other sphere of life. But Königsmarck was not the man to accept dismissal from a woman; he wrote back in tragic terms: "At last the wretched day which I have so much feared has arrived! I must marry; since you wish it it is done. I must follow your wishes; you will it so—that is enough, my death-warrant is signed by the hand I adore. I own I never should have expected so fatal a sentence signed by you. But of what can I com-

plain? I must remember that I have loved you a year. I ought to have known the sex better than to believe all you have said to me, but alas! as I was weak enough to believe it I must now be firm enough to bear all the consequences"; and so forth, until Sophia Dorothea, vacillating as a child and always deceived by protestations, relented towards so impetuous a lover, forgot her mother's warnings, and only desired Königsmarck "to restrain himself."

Even then she had another opportunity, which she at first strove to grasp, of forcing her thoughts back from her lover to the round of duty and safety. Prince George fell rather seriously ill of measles in the autumn, and his wife helped to nurse him, a line of conduct so proper and admirable as for the time to smooth over the estrangement between them. But she could not help letting Königsmarck know of these improved conjugal relations, and he was bitterly sarcastic over her "weakness" in tolerating her husband's advances, and utterly refused to acquiesce in the attempt she was making to draw back from her close intimacy with himself. His letters depict his furious jealousy, his despair, his constancy. He "would rather go off to the Indies than be treated in this way. If our intrigue were a little fashionable gallantry—well and good; I should accommodate myself to it, I should quarrel with you nearly every day, but I treat our affair more seriously. . . . Did I not beg you for God's sake to tell me what ailed you? But could I get anything from you except 'Leave me in peace.' I answered, 'No, I will know at any cost.' You then had the charity to say to me, 'Get you gone.' I did so, with the fixed resolution not to appear in your sight again unless you positively ordered it."

Not content with this outburst, the Count next wrote to Fräulein von dem Knesebeck, and confided to her his bitter complaint against the Princess. He felt sure that

a certain gallant gentleman he had observed near her at the opera was the cause of her coldness to him, and he was furious that he had not been invited to her sledging party on the day after, but was left to "tell his troubles to the walls of his lonely room." Such vehemence seems to have been well calculated, for a reconciliation followed which put Königsmarck into high spirits. Prince George recovered from his attack of sickness, and his wife went to enjoy the rest of a visit to her parents. Königsmarck, careless what others might think, so long as she smiled upon him, actually followed her to Celle, thereby arousing still further the alarm of the Duchess Eleonora. Urged by her mother, Sophia Dorothea made a last effort to escape her danger, and begged the Count to go away. Intent only upon his selfish passion, he artfully threatened to take her at her word and painted the terrible consequences. She wished him gone! (he wrote). He would go, past recall; he would seek a glorious death; for if he might not live with her, he cared not to live at all. He thanked her with humility for her graciousness; she had restored life to him by showing that all the arguments of others could not turn her from him, and now he would go away, following the example of a friend of his who was also hopelessly in love. This gentleman was going to the war in the fatal Morea; Königsmarck would go with him, and he hoped that neither of them would ever return. Sophia Dorothea, he trusted, would have the charity to see his epitaph made, nor must she forget to put in it that he had sought death when he no longer was allowed to gaze on her eyes. His worst sorrow was the thought that she would forget him when he was gone. "Are you a woman to love one out of sight? you will forsake me; ah God! that thought;—have you a heart so cruel?"

Königsmarck had taken the right line; for, terrified at the thought of his danger, Sophia Dorothea retracted

her words at once, and so little permanent impression remained from her mother's entreaties, that she not only cancelled her prayer for his departure, but actually permitted him to hold an interview with her in secret.

But while Königsmarck was jubilant over the Princess's surrender, a sinister event took place in the ducal family which should have been as a warning beacon to him. Augustus, the second son, whom the Duke had sent from home disinherited, was slain in battle, and the turbulent Max succeeded to the position, such as it was, of second son. He, like Augustus and all the other brothers, had refused to pledge himself to support his father's new plans of establishing the rule of primogeniture in his dominions, and he began to weave a plot to checkmate the scheme and secure some sort of appanage, now or in the future, for himself and his younger brothers. He thought he might enter a formal protest at the imperial court, by way of leaving an opening for asserting his claims later, and he tried to secure a bride from the influential Hohenzollern family of Ansbach, in hopes of assistance, at all events on his father's death, from that and allied German courts. Antony Ulric of Wolfenbüttel was, of course, engaged in the business, for Max had no scruple in applying to his father's rivals, who would be but too glad to see him embarrassed at home. The knowledge that Ernest Augustus was striving to get himself created an Elector had stirred up a great deal of ill-will among the minor courts, and had even for a short time produced a coldness on the part of George William, who, as elder brother, felt he had a prior claim to the honour. The Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel family resented the ambitious attempt keenly, and from this time onwards were always ready to hamper the Duke of Hanover's plans. But Max's plot came to the ears of his sister Charlotte, the Electress of Brandenburg, and she, who always remained

friendly to her brother George, at once revealed what she knew to her father.

The Duke, however, would not have the malcontents at once arrested or warned; they were allowed to continue their machinations, and carefully watched until they had become deeply committed. Then, in December, 1691, Prince Max and his chief confidant, von Moltke, the Master of the Horse, were suddenly arrested and imprisoned, while their friends were brought before a court of justice and cross-questioned, for legal forms were scrupulously observed. The Duchess Sophia herself was subjected to the indignity of an examination and made to confess—as if it were a disloyalty—that she had sometimes sent money to her sons. She was then forbidden to see or communicate with Max, who, in the meantime, was kept a close prisoner. The Duke professed to believe that his life had been aimed at, and the citizens were informed that high treason was brewing within their walls, most dangerous to the "peace, safety, and weal of the House and the country." Their sympathy was all with their popular sovereign, and it was amid fierce threats that the Master of the Horse was led to prison shortly before the Christmas of 1691. Prince Max was strictly confined in the fortress of Hameln, but his defiance soon weakened; he was a selfish youth with little honourable feeling, as he showed in later life, when he offered to turn Catholic if he was assured a pension for so doing; and he now broke down before the prospect of severe punishment, and confessed.

The complete unravelling of the plot could not injure the two dead princes, Augustus and Charles, though the revelation of their intentions was probably something of a shock to the Duke; but he was highly incensed upon finding that the principal instigator of the cabal appeared to be Duke Antony Ulric at Wolfenbüttel, a personage beyond his reach.

In spite of his wrath, however, he condescended to listen to the abject submission of Max, and at the intercession of the Duke of Celle "allowed mercy to win the day," that is, he did not send his son to the scaffold, or even to incarceration in a fortress, but only into banishment, exacting from him before he left Hanover an oath of renunciation of all his possible claims to any sort of inheritance in his father's dominions. Thus the position of George, as sole heir of the whole, appeared to be strengthened.

In the meantime the Carnival celebrations were going on with the accustomed brilliance, in strange contrast to the gloom of a trial which threatened to send at least some of the accused to the scaffold. The Duke of Celle was there, sometimes, in the intervals between operas and balls, helping to preside over the court of judges. Other visitors, too, had gathered, eager to pick up what gossip they could of the Prince's catastrophe and his mother's distress. This long visit of the court of Celle to Hanover gave the Duchess Eleonora opportunity of remonstrating afresh with her daughter. Already the Duchess Sophia had spoken to her of the Princess's conduct, and she was greatly alarmed by what she heard and, as it seems, by what she observed. She let Sophia Dorothea know that others suspected the intrigue, and that she had received hints on the matter from the Princess Dowager of East Friesland, who was also a visitor for the Carnival; it was high time to break off this dangerous affair before an open scandal occurred.

Unhappily Sophia Dorothea paid no attention to her mother, towards whom she seems to have lost all filial deference. Her hesitation was now past. She almost placed herself in Königsmarck's hands, to think and act as he should advise. She dared not, at that moment, venture to see him privately, but she wrote to him what her mother had said, and sent Fräulein von dem Knesebeck

to tell him how much seemed to be discovered, and at the same time to describe to him both her consternation and her proud resolution "not to be easily intimidated."

Königsmarck, blinded by passion and pride, only poured abuse upon the Duchess of Celle and the Princess of East Friesland, and begged the Princess not to listen to "their prejudiced advice," nor to confide anything further to her mother. "Though you are her favourite (he wrote), she will not fail to observe us more closely and should she find that you speak to me she will reflect upon it. I will say to myself: 'her mother has forbidden it and yet she does it.' Even now, as she is a great talker, I am afraid she will tell the Duke. Try to prevent that blow, or we are lost for ever. . . . It is cruel to see that anybody may pay court, and that you may talk to everybody without any one finding anything to say against it; I am the only one excluded." Yet when the Carnival was over, and the ladies of the court all went to pay a spring visit to Celle, Königsmarck, regardless of discovery and of Sophia Dorothea's fears, betook himself thither too, as if to demonstrate to the Duchess how little he cared for prudence. He was able for a time to mask his real feelings, and managed to ingratiate himself with Duke George William and to occupy Countess Platen with a little flirtation, but he could not deceive Sophia Dorothea's mother, who did not cease her efforts to guard her daughter's safety while maintaining perfect politeness to the Count, who in consequence angrily termed her, in one of his letters, "the most deceitful of women." He pitied the Princess for "having to bear her preaching at you," and when he at length returned to Hanover he wrote: "I wish you were here instead of with your fool of a mother." Refined feeling must not be expected from either of the correspondents, nor perhaps from anybody at Hanover, but that Königsmarck could use to the daughter language so strange

about her mother indicates his close familiarity with the Princess as well as her estrangement, for his sake, from her parents.

The ladies had been sent to Celle at this particular time (the spring of 1692) to be out of the way while the concluding scene of Max's tragedy was enacted at Hanover. Von Moltke had been condemned as guilty of high treason, and the judges had pronounced the barbarous ancient sentence of breaking on the wheel. The nobility were horror-stricken; the Moltke family offered an immense fine to save the unhappy officer's life; his wife and child fell at the Duke's feet, and the Duchess Sophia begged for mercy, but all in vain. The only mercy the Duke would show was to commute the sentence into a simple beheading. Moltke was awaiting the day of execution when a trusty servant succeeded in conveying a rope into the prison. The gaolers were made drunk in the usual way, the faithful servant made the rope fast and sat down in his master's chair to personate him as long as possible while the prisoner got through the window and let himself down. But the cord was not strong enough; either the good servant had been exceptionally careless, or the plan was known and the rope had been tampered with; it broke, and the poor fellow was flung on the ground close to a sentry. "A hundred thalers to let me go," he cried; but the sentry merely called out the guard, and Moltke was marched back to prison. He was executed with due ceremony, and so loyal were the Duke of Hanover's dutiful subjects, that they were with difficulty induced to allow the traitor's widow to bury his corpse. Neither within nor without the walls would the churches concede him a grave till the Duke positively commanded one, and the woman employed to lay out the body, who had pitifully replaced the severed head in the natural position, found her action so much resented that nobody would employ her.

Sophia Dorothea and Königsmarck might well have taken warning by this tragic event. A sovereign who would entrap his own son, humiliate his own wife before a court of judges, and arbitrarily prejudge the case by declaring it "high treason" before the trial began, would be little likely to spare his daughter-in-law should anything to her discredit come to his ears.

Altogether the year 1692 was an agitating one both for court and city. Besides the affair of Prince Max and Moltke, European politics demanded the Duke's most serious attention. Considerable ill will towards Hanover now subsisted not only in Wolfenbüttel, but in Saxony, and the Grand Alliance, to which Ernest Augustus was pledged, had not as yet won any great success in the war. Hanoverian battalions had to march again to the Netherlands, and this time (it was Steinkirk year) the campaign was a severe and a bloody one and the allies were thoroughly defeated. Only the Duke drew any profit out of it, for as a reward for his support of the allied cause he at last obtained from the Emperor a grant of that great object of his ambition, the Electoral dignity. Most of the other eight Electors were unwilling that a ninth should be created, and the Emperor's knowledge of their ill will had hitherto prevented him from raising Hanover to this proud position. Nor was their opposition overcome even yet, in spite of the diplomatic campaign which Ernest Augustus had for some time been conducting to win their consent. His frequent consultations during this year with his brother at Celle and with other petty sovereigns had necessitated an unusual amount of travelling, so that the court was scarcely ever for a month together in one place, and the consequent separation of Sophia Dorothea and Königsmarck had probably caused their correspondence to become noticeable. It was this correspondence which was their ruin.

Already Sophia Dorothea had felt the terror of dis-

covery imminent. Her fears are plainly expressed in the earliest of her letters preserved. "Everything confirms my feeling that I am betrayed," she had written in July, 1691: "if la Perspective [Countess Platen] meddles, judge yourself all that I have to fear. But I have already told you that only your violent rages can make me tremble." She certainly regarded her lover as notoriously fickle, yet thought no less of him for that. If he forsake her she will wish to live no longer: she despairs only because every step he takes carries him farther from her: "I thought a thousand times of following you; what would I not give to be able to do it, and to be always with you; but I should be too happy and there is no perfect bliss in this world." The dallying with so wild a wish and its prompt renunciation are both characteristic. In the meantime, she says, she is afraid that Fräulein von dem Knesebeck may be suspected, and the latter is in so great concern—either for her own reputation or the fear of danger to her mistress—that she is weeping.

From the first the two lovers were at the mercy of others. Eleonora von dem Knesebeck was true as steel, but Königsmarck had to trust to servants, one of whom once brought a letter from the Princess to him in the midst of a party of men with: "A letter from your mistress and she wants an answer!" At one time they arranged a private place of call in the town at which to leave their letters, where "our good friend" would "take precautions" and forward the Count's to his address: but, as no court lady could go about alone, the whole of the correspondence, and therefore its secret, had to be entrusted to messengers to carry. Early in 1692, half a year after the despairing letter quoted from above, the signs of serious danger became unmistakable.

Worthy Marshal Podewils, who thought highly of the young Count, took the opportunity of the latter's de-

parture for the Netherlands campaign to say a farewell to him in private and first, in veiled terms, warned him against dissimulation, then, in an almost fatherly manner, begged him never to let his love hinder him from thinking of his career. Philip's sister, Aurora, too, had heard rumours and wrote to warn him of the danger of his proceedings, and, what was yet more ominous, he discovered that he was dogged by a spy of Countess Platen's. Yet the infatuated man seemed to think he risked no more than a professional "ruin," and continued to write letters of outspoken passion to his "most gracious lady in the universe," and to receive her replies at every halting-place. When he was on a campaign, many, if not all, of their letters were sent by "the post," and however carefully enveloped and sealed ran the risk of being opened and inspected by authority, a risk very great in war time, and doubly so when Königsmarck's letters came from some distant place to the remote country house at Brockhausen, the pleasant little hunting-box among the woods where Sophia Dorothea would spend weeks at a time with her mother, and where it could hardly escape notice that she often received two or three letters at a time from the same hand. The couriers, too, were often delayed by military precautions, or by the floods so frequent in the flat region of Lüneburg; or they did not know the lodging of the Count and left his mail elsewhere, perhaps at the mercy of prying curiosity. Letters, therefore, might easily go astray or even be lost altogether, and if any unfriendly eye should read them the attempt at cipher in the matter of names was by no means sufficient to conceal the identity of the correspondents.

Fräulein von dem Knesebeck, fully alive to the dangers of the position, was so much alarmed by the non-arrival of some of the letters that she wrote herself to the Count to tell him how long it was since they had heard from

him. It would be better, she considered, to send by special messenger, dangerous as that might be, *if there was treachery*. "*Mon Dieu*, monsieur, what is the meaning of the letters going so badly? I would give a great deal to know. Adieu. *She* believes that you are faithless to her, it is in vain I tell her, No, she will not believe me. All my fears dwell on treachery; it must be either that, or your man, or your woman [the landlady who was to receive or forward his mails]. You would do well to write to them to know the reason." She would forward her note, she added, through the postmaster of Celle, for greater security. Königsmarck's forgetfulness, too, perturbed the faithful confidante. He had promised, as a precaution, to number his letters, yet he sometimes forgot what number he had last used and continued irregularly. He himself told the Princess complacently how he had made a little love-song, and sung it among his companions, whom he had told that his lady's name was Léonisse. Now and then Sophia Dorothea herself wonders whether he can have read her letters carefully, for he seemed not to recollect what she told him and would ask fresh questions, or profess ignorance or indignation over details which she had already fully explained. Then he would distress her by accusations which almost seemed to her—as they certainly seem to later readers—as if he took a veritable pleasure in tormenting himself and her by seizing upon every pretext to doubt her fidelity to him.

It is clear, amid all the anxiety and mutual recrimination or protestation, that the letters travelled ill. Intervals were sometimes inexplicably long. Sometimes a letter totally missed its destination. Sometimes a seal or a wafer betrayed a hint of having been tampered with, and once a letter which Königsmarck had written to Prince Ernest, the youngest of the Hanover brothers, and now his especial friend, was actually taken to Prince George

with his own mail, and opened and partly read by him. Königsmarck was uneasy over this accident, partly because he had written rather broad jests upon the dominant party at court—that of the Platens, and partly because it proved the uncertainty of the post. Yet he went on writing to his ladylove in the freest style, with no more disguise than the use of a few numbers or nicknames.

It was childish to suppose that such a correspondence could remain a secret. Sophia Dorothea, in this respect more clear-sighted than her lover, was conscious enough of the ever-present likelihood of discovery, and of the ruin which discovery would mean to both. The person whom she feared was Countess Platen. She feared for her own reputation and position should the Countess find out how different was the Count's devotion to the princess from his professed devotion to herself; but she feared far more for Königsmarck. The Countess would easily be able to prime Duke Ernest Augustus with whatever tale she chose; and if "La Platen's" fondness should turn, as it would upon discovery, to resentment, Sophia Dorothea feared for Königsmarck's very life. She declared that she would rather he were considered as the gallant of her hateful rival than risk for him the terrors of her revenge. "Do not have the folly," she wrote, when her lover was absent in Hanover, "to stop going to La Platen's, it is absolutely necessary to humour her." And Königsmarck obeyed her; dined, supped, danced and flirted with the Countess, so cheerfully as to arouse, in spite of her own advice, Sophia Dorothea's transient anger, and felt sufficiently confident of his own powers of fascination to assure her, absurdly enough, that not La Platen, but the Duchess Sophia "would be her ruin," or perhaps, even her mother: "she might tell the Duke and that would ruin us." So the foolish princess, in obedience to his instructions, instead of confiding in the one person in whom she could trust, went

on prevaricating to the anxious Duchess of Celle, who could only take pains to keep her daughter at her side for as long as possible, now that Prince George was himself helping to conduct the campaign in Flanders.

Though Sophia Dorothea had urgently desired her husband's permission to stay with her mother during this time, she complained to Königsmarck that it was very dull to have to spend whole days with "le pédagogue" (their nickname for the Duchess), "who talks of nothing but the danger of giving in to one's feelings, I say *Amen* to it all, and get on as well as possible with her." She was terror-stricken at the news, which her husband had written to her, that there was likely to be a battle, and at the thought that the one being in the world for whom she cared to live was exposed to a thousand dangers. "If you love me take heed to yourself; I shall die if the least harm befall you": and she breaks into rhyme:

"Jai bien changer de lieu mon soin est inutile
Je porte par tout mon amour
Et je nen suis pas plus tranquille
Dans ce paisible sejour.

"I see no end to my sorrow, and I think the time an eternity that I still have to spend without you. But then what joy when I see you again! I shall not be able to control my ecstasy and everybody will see how I worship you."[1]

But her moments of clear sight seem to have occurred and passed away without leaving any permanent effect, despite the fits of terror from which she so often suffered. She lost herself again in protestations of affection. Even Königsmarck's jealousy and his assertions that she is flirting with strangers fire less her anger than passionate words of love. She did once like flirting, she candidly owns, but since she began to love him other

[1] Letter of 27 June (7 July N.S.), from Brockhausen (1691).

people's compliments have no savour. "I talk only to the ladies and do it with actual pleasure . . . for you are too charming for one to care to look at anybody else after you." But Königsmarck still wrote reproaches and suspicion. For what, she indignantly asks several times, does he blame her? "Is it possible you can really think what you write to me? And can you have so bad an opinion of me as to imagine me capable of no longer thinking of you? You alone fill my mind and I care so little for the rest of the world that I do not give the least consideration to it." And again—"Is it for loving you to idolatry, for having neglected all the friends I had in the world and for neither caring for the sermons of my family nor for all the misfortunes which may come upon me? Nothing can be compared to my distress, and I cannot bear you to think that I am capable of falling short of all that I have promised you." To whose malicious tales has he been listening, she asks,[1] certainly they were unworthy of the honour he did them: "I talked hardly at all to the Piedmontese, and not at all to the Austrian. I wrote to you exactly."

Sometimes the letters take the form of a sort of diary, that the absent Königsmarck may see how faithfully she reserves her hours for thoughts of him. From these pages the restless dullness of the court life seems to appear. Every few days one or another of the ducal family would go or come between the different *châteaux* of Ernest Augustus or George William, and on each such occasion formal greetings and leave-takings had to be gone through by every other member of the family. Every evening the Duchess Sophia "held court," and it was necessary for Sophia Dorothea, when she was in the same residence, to attend the gathering, or "pay her court," as she calls it, about eight o'clock. Afterwards would come supper, and then she might retire to her room

[1] Letter of 30 June (10 July N.S.), from Brockhausen (1691).

and Königsmarck's letters. There were always card tables standing ready, and the usual mode of passing the time, whether at Celle or Hanover, in afternoons and evenings, was to play cards with the members of the family and the principal courtiers or visitors. Once or twice a week, not oftener, during the absence of Duke Ernest Augustus, a comedy or opera brought the whole of the same company together in full dress; and there were the usual stiff compliments and polite conversations to be gone through, always regulated by inflexible etiquette as to seats, courtesies, and bows. It does not seem an interesting round, and Sophia Dorothea did not find it so; and during the frequent absences of the Duke and Prince George upon the business of the war she used to shut herself up in her rooms for hours at a time.

Thus she writes from Celle (July, 1692) to justify her conduct, for Königsmarck had accused her vehemently of flirting when she attended the state ball given by the English envoy, Sir William Colt, in June: "After the review the Reformer [her husband] went to Brockhausen, and did not come back till Friday. On Saturday Don Diego [Duke Ernest Augustus] came as he usually does, and the same day appeared the Count who upsets you so much. I played in the evening and only spoke to him at the [card] table, and very little. Next day was Sunday, there was music, I came late, I played as I usually do and said a few words to him as he was watching the play. On Monday Don Diego went home again. He was to have come back for the Comedy but la Romaine [Duchess Sophia] came alone and went home at once. I am ready to take all the oaths you like that I had not the slightest conversation with him and that I never even thought of it. The same day he took his leave of me as I was passing through the duchess's ante-room, I did not stop at all, and I went to my apartments. He went away next day. On Tuesday I did not

leave my room. On Wednesday the Reformer left. I did not appear on Thursday, and Friday the same. I saw nobody those four days but my women. On Saturday Don Diego came back and I made my appearance, and the Sunday was that of the festivity [Colt's ball], of which I have told you so much that there is nothing more to say. Monday I took my leave of la Romaine, and Tuesday I set out."

The Princess was indeed leading a kind of double life. For a time she was almost happy in the strength of her own love, and in the consciousness of Königsmarck's. She says that she thought of him all day and dreamed of him at night. Once, when he went away, she spent two whole nights watching from her window lest she should miss the last sight of him, Mademoiselle Knesebeck remonstrating in vain, "for I was past listening to reason." She sought solitude to be able to think of him. She spent whole days talking of him to the faithful Knesebeck. She would like to shut herself up altogether, she said, were it only possible, for she cared for nothing but to please him and prove her devotion. She kept his letters by her, they were her only solace in his absence, and she would read and re-read them by the hour. Often she retired early to bed and had it given out that she was settling down to sleep, in order to be alone to study them. She could only venture to write to him, of course, when she was alone with Knesebeck (absolutely alone she never was), so she would begin to write about midnight and go on until three or four o'clock in the morning. She even managed to send him her portrait and to receive his in return.

But she did not succeed in keeping these proceedings a complete secret. Her father and mother came into her room one day (August, 1692) while she was writing. "All I could do was to conceal whom I was writing to. It would have been a fine feast for them if they had

seen; they show a great deal of affection for me, but they are always lecturing me on living properly with the Prince. My father will not hear even a jest on that topic, so that I dare not speak to him often about it." Once, as she was reading the letters, her mother came, though she had given out that she was asleep, "to surprise me a second time," and all that the vigilant Knesebeck could do was to push the precious letters beneath the quilt, so that Sophia Dorothea was dying of fright lest they should rustle, and "scarcely dared move until my mother gave me the great pleasure of going away." On another and later occasion she was caught in the very act of writing to him, his portrait fastened to her screen, and this produced what must have been a very serious scene. Her account of it is gone, but Königsmarck replies that her report makes him tremble. As time went on Sophia Dorothea's descriptions of narrow escapes, and of her terror of discovery, "and my ruin," grow more and more poignant. People were talking to her openly and significantly about Königsmarck, though in the recognized style of compliment. One gallant courtier assured her that he was composing verses on the Count's lamentable departure from court, which was no doubt the cause of her regretted aloofness from society. A mischief-making lady had asked "the discreet Prince" [Max] whether he did not want to challenge Count Königsmarck to the duel for getting on so well with the Princess while he was himself so unsuccessful. Countess Platen, giving an apparently friendly hint, informed her that people were feeling offended by her neglectful manner, to which she stiffly replied that, as she treated all just alike, she did not see that they had any cause of offence.

In the meantime Königsmarck was learning no more prudence. His letters were filled with jealous complaints. If he heard that at the opera she had spoken to a

Brandenburg courtier, he felt sure that she had a long conversation with him. If foreign visitors paid their respects, he upbraided her with taking pleasure in their compliments. He was furious because she had so light a heart that she could dance at Colt's ball: "Go on like this, I implore you, such ways will cure me of my passion and make me forswear any intrigue whatever." The wife of his own lieutenant-colonel mischievously teased him, one day, about "his ladylove," and assured him that he was now out of favour with her. Instead of realizing that his intrigue was the topic of news-letters and common gossip, he rushed away to his quarters to pen a wild effusion of rage on the inconstancy which he had instantly taken for granted.

His unkindness and his absence combined with her own fears to wear out Sophia Dorothea's health. She wept much, wept until she was actually ill. Fräulein von dem Knesebeck was in so much concern that she ventured to add a note of her own at the end of one of her mistress's letters, to beg him to "write something to comfort the Princess." Her grief told upon her looks; "Even the Prince," she once wrote, noticed her changed appearance and desired her to take care of herself— "he was right, but my illness only comes from loving you, and I do not want to be cured of it."

Every one who knew her could see that something was the matter, and they might even guess at the cause. Her parents, now beginning to age, had, she says, at first commented with some approbation upon her avoidance of gaieties: "They think it is in order to be with them that I shun everybody; they do not know that it is in order to prove to you the better my passion and my devotion." But after a while the Princess's lack of spirit gave anxiety, and the Duchess of Celle, herself in weak health at the time, planned to take her daughter to Wiesbaden for the sake of the waters.

For this journey the husband's permission had to be obtained, but Sophia Dorothea writes that she will not go unless Königsmarck will also grant permission. She took a kind of pride in her submission to the man she loved, however unreasonable he might be, and, knowing that his jealousy might lead him to resent her intercourse with gay society, she placed herself under his orders, although the journey was to include a visit to the famous fair at Frankfort (in August, 1692). They will find it difficult to make her go, she writes, if Königsmarck chooses to bid her stay at home, awkward as her position will then be. But she thinks he is not likely to object, for, in the first place, nobody will be there, and, in the second, the suite going upon the journey with them are all to be "persons of no account . . . two essential points for you."

Permission to visit the fair was intimated, however, for which Sophia Dorothea expressed her gratitude to her lover, and she duly went and apparently managed to enjoy herself a little, but it was only to entail upon her letters full of fierce reproaches from her selfish and unreasonable cavalier — reproaches which moved the Princess to alternate grief and indignation. Neither, in fact, felt the slightest confidence in the other. If a letter did not come by every post the Princess upbraided Königsmarck for his flagging affection. Even the Prince, she once told him, had written to her; surely he could not be less desirous of writing to her than her husband!

After the tour to Wiesbaden and Frankfort Sophia Dorothea returned with her mother to the country seat at Eppsdorf, until the approaching close of the campaign brought her back to Hanover to join in the reception of the returning princes and officers. Königsmarck had been disconcerted by not being able to obtain leave of absence from his regiment when the fighting ceased. He had been obliged to go into winter quarters for a

while with the troops, and when he at length returned to Hanover it was but to be among the spectators of a ceremonial which for a prolonged period kept him apart from the Princess and flung him into paroxysms of rage and jealousy.

Duke Ernest Augustus was now ready for the assumption of his new dignity, after which ceremony he and the Duchess were known as Elector and Electress, and their son and daughter-in-law as Electoral Prince and Princess. They paid a state visit, in the December of 1692, to their daughter and son-in-law at Brandenburg, and Sophia Dorothea seized the opportunity to feign illness, escape the state journey (though the official report said she was present), and contrive to hold an interview with Königsmarck—secretly as they fondly believed.

On the next day the new Elector and Electress and the Electoral Prince returned to Hanover and made a state entry into the town; a dozen cannon were mounted on the new bridge, and during the state banquet they were fired off whenever healths were drunk. The Elector had had a thousand new gold pieces coined as a largesse for his servants.

All this, however, was a mere preliminary to the splendid ceremony of installation which took place a few days later. Ernest Augustus had sent Platen and the learned and famous Grote to Vienna to be his proxies before the Emperor, and Grote brought back to Hanover the token and symbol of electoral dignity, which was a *Hat* of particular form. The Duke and Duchess of Celle came to witness the ceremony of its reception. The whole court was assembled, drawn up in a kind of crescent, Ernest Augustus and Sophia being in the centre. To their right and next his father stood the Electoral Prince, with his little son beside him, and next to him Countess Platen and her daughter with their ladies. Next to

Sophia came the Duke of Celle, by him stood his wife, and next to her the Electoral Princess with her little daughter beside her and her ladies behind her. Behind the central figures were grouped the noble officers, and behind the Platen family stood the ladies of the Electress's suite.

Grote and Count von Platen, the ambassadors or proxies who had just returned from Vienna, stood forth. Platen read aloud the imperial edict, Grote presented the symbolical Hat on a cushion, and there was, too, a diamond coronet for the Electress on another cushion. The Duke with dignity took the Hat and placed it on his own head with the words, "By the Grace of God we assume this earthly dignity." He next handed the diamond coronet to the Electress Sophia (whose ladies fastened it securely to her powdered headdress), and then, turning to the court, he cried, "Long live his majesty the Emperor!" They responded with shouts of "Hoch! Hoch!" to our gracious Elector—to our gracious Electress—to our noble Crown Prince—to the whole electoral house of Hanover.

Cannons were fired and bells were rung, and the royal band struck up the new "Hanoverian Hymn" composed for the occasion by Steffani. Amidst the joyful clamour everybody was presented to the Elector and Electress as though a new *régime* was commencing, after which the company proceeded to a state banquet which filled up the rest of the afternoon hours until seven o'clock. They then rose to witness a very magnificent performance in the royal theatre, where Steffani produced "a ballet allegorical of the event," and the leading part was sung by Faustina Bordini, a *prima donna* of European fame.

The acquisition of this important dignity caused the winter to go by in a series of festivals, for congratulations poured in from friendly powers, from England,

Sweden, and Holland, as well as from Saxony, Brandenburg, and Bavaria, and all the envoys had to be solemnly received and splendidly entertained. Court and city were in festivity for two or three months, and even the Sundays of Lent were no exception. On one Sunday their ducal and electoral highnesses came home from church to a formal banquet of much etiquette, spent the afternoon at cards in the various apartments prepared, and after supper held a court ball. On another, the morning service having been duly attended, the city, which felt itself honoured by the Duke's new dignity, entertained the whole company with a masked ball, and though the ducal party went home to the palace to supper, they returned afterwards and danced till the end of the ball, about two o'clock in the morning.

It was a political demonstration, and an exceedingly costly one to the Hanoverian exchequer. So it is to be hoped that the Duke—or *Elector*, as he must henceforth be styled—had succeeded in saving some money by the wonderful "economy-edict" which he had put in force the year before, possibly in preparation for these great expenses. Like many a man of extravagance, Ernest Augustus was unwilling that those about him should be wasteful, and had just been giving his personal attention to the expenses of the palace kitchens, the perquisites of cooks and butlers, and the luxury of his household. Nor did he think it beneath his dignity to make precise rules about the particular bottles of wine to be allowed for each table. He forbade any of his family to have "private tables" in their own apartments to which they invited their own guests, only his wife and the Electoral Prince and Princess might in future eat meals in private, "and only to be served for two or three persons then." The very bones from the soup kitchen were directed to be sold! This rather severe sumptuary law seems to have been accepted by the family in the light of a joke, and

they got the learned Leibniz to compose an elaborate round-robin "from the dogs," which was presented to his Highness from the two favourite dogs, in the name of them all, to protest against robbing them of their recognised perquisite of bones.

During the course of these protracted ceremonies Sophia Dorothea had, of course, to occupy her official station with correctness, so that she and the Electoral Prince were together more than usual. But necessary and natural as this was, Königsmarck allowed himself to express the pangs of almost insane jealousy, and wrote violent letters in which he insulted the Princess with coarse taunts which she found hard to endure.

But the year which followed the bestowal of the Electoral dignity was one of reverses for Hanover both in war and politics, and during that season of increasing public gloom the uncontrollable passion of Sophia Dorothea and Königsmarck began to draw unmistakably to a tragic climax.

For the larger part of the year 1693 Königsmarck remained in Hanover, though he was obliged in the summer to go on a military expedition to the Danish frontier. He came to the usual festivities—for carnival must be celebrated (in the winter of 1693-4) in spite of military disaster and although the Electress was seriously ill—but he found himself treated coldly by the Duke. His sister Aurora, too, had already been the cause, or the victim, of some vexatious scandal in which Countess Platen was also concerned, and the latter lady felt aggrieved. The quarrel must have been of some importance, for the Electress herself tried to intervene, and wrote a kind of cautionary letter to Aurora on behalf of Countess Platen. Finally the Elector had inflicted upon her the insult of a politely-worded message to desire her not to visit Hanover for the winter season of 1692-3, "as she had already seen the Hanover carnival." Königs-

marck felt sure that this was really all due to "the Platen," who had loftily declared that *she* could permit Countess Aurora to come if the Duke could be sufficiently satisfied to grant his consent, but who took good care that he did not give it.

This may possibly have been the ground, as Aurora afterwards declared it was, of her brother's breach with Countess Platen which so much terrified Sophia Dorothea. Aurora found some compensation in the friendship of Antony Ulric and his pressing invitations to Wolfenbüttel, but the two lovers felt the loss of the cloak her presence had before afforded to their intrigue.

Sophia Dorothea could descry no gleam of sunshine on the horizon. "I am trembling on the brink of a precipice," she wrote, "but my own danger is the least of my anxieties . . . more than death or disgrace I fear that you may forsake me." Yet she apparently took no steps to avoid the threatening ruin. Perhaps she was too ignorant to realize all that it would mean. She did not even detect the hint of danger in the sympathy bestowed on her by her cousin the Electress of Brandenburg. Charlotte, although in so many ways a worthy daughter of the Electress Sophia, had flirtations of her own, and might very well feel interested in Sophia Dorothea's, but she was always staunch to her mother the Electress Sophia, and it was she who had betrayed Max's plot to the Duke. Her sympathy was of the inquisitive kind; she asked questions about Königsmarck, and had a great deal to say about his relations with Countess Platen, which evidently perturbed Sophia Dorothea. Königsmarck was alarmed to find how much the young Electress knew, and besought the Princess not to trust her. With regard to "La Platen," as he had nothing reassuring—in any sense—to say which could allay the jealousy or alarm of the Princess, he burst into voluble rage. The Platen was the cause of all his mis-

fortunes (apparently even of his bad luck at play and his loss of his Swedish estates), but he would revenge himself upon her! He would pick a quarrel with her son and kill him in the duel: he would publish the story of her persecution of him and leave her not a rag of character: he would insult her publicly: if only he were the Master of creation he would fling her to the lions, bears, and tigers: and much more of the same kind. But he had no advice, no plan for the future, and he did not prevent Sophia Dorothea from quarrelling outright with Countess Platen and thereby making the position yet more dangerous. The Electress of Brandenburg, who had certainly helped to bring about the quarrel, sensibly counselled her cousin to make it up again; but the Princess was too proud, and vowed she would not do so unless the Elector himself commanded it.

Such a quarrel must, of course, have become public property at once, and probably every one knew or guessed at the real reason. Probably, also, all Hanover was informed of an extraordinary breach of discipline and etiquette committed, at the close of the year 1692, by Count Königsmarck, who had left his regiment, then in camp, without leave and had come secretly to Hanover in the Duke's absence. He had visited the Princess in secret, but had felt bound afterwards to report himself to old Marshal Podewils. The Marshal had merely desired him to remain in Hanover, which he took as a mark of great friendliness, and it was thus that he had been in the capital during the ceremonies which celebrated the arrival of the Electoral Hat. But he found himself neglected. The Elector took no open notice of the breach of discipline, but treated the offending officer with marked coldness.

This was but one of several warnings. The Electress Sophia more than once spent quite a long time talking to her daughter-in-law about Count Königsmarck and his

handsome looks. Sophia Dorothea felt surprised, but in writing her report to her lover only comments that she is afraid other ladies will agree with the Electress and will bestow so much attention upon her fickle cavalier "as to cause me grief." Yet she acknowledges herself to be extremely unskilful in hiding her feelings; she might have felt sure that the astute Electress was watching her. Königsmarck felt more anxiety, and when, after his return, the Electress next proceeded to converse with him about the Electoral Princess, he was evidently staggered. She seemed very friendly, he said, but what was she aiming at? She must be trying to find out something. Nevertheless, he observed no more precaution than before, and was actually furious if the Princess, for safety's sake, behaved towards him in public with conventional coldness. Her letters ravish him, her manner freezes him, he complains. He was rushing upon his fate.

Whether or no the stolen meetings of the lovers had hitherto been really unobserved, they certainly were so no longer. Spies were on the watch, and in June two interviews at Brockhausen were certainly discovered, for Königsmarck perceived that he was dogged by two men, while the Princess was also "pounced upon" in some way which terrified both her and Königsmarck. Yet, with insane folly, he disregarded these proofs of danger and the plainly-spoken remonstrances of his friends. Both Marshal Podewils and Prince Ernest told him openly that his conduct would lead to "very unpleasant and serious consequences." Precautions were evidently taken at court, for it became increasingly difficult for the lovers to meet or to arrange plans. Fräulein von dem Knesebeck could not always deliver the letter or the message with which she was charged; in fact, a sharp watch was kept, and Sophia Dorothea found herself constantly in the company either of her

mother, to whom she was now permitted to go for weeks at a time, or in that of the Electress Sophia, who used to try to draw her out of her new habit of retirement by providing special amusements, such as musical parties and picnics in the woods, or by intervening to brush aside some of the excuses the Princess would make for avoiding company. Her last ruse was the rather comical one of *taking a bath.* A bath was regarded as of the nature of medical treatment, and after venturing upon one Sophia Dorothea must stay within her room for a whole day to avoid the danger of catching cold. Her mother-in-law therefore interfered and would order her not to have another bath "so soon."

But the Princess felt no gratitude for the Electress's kindly attentions, which, as she complained to Königsmarck, bored her terribly and kept her from writing to him, and she had the extreme folly to quarrel with Charlotte of Brandenburg, with whom she had held such intimate conversations about Königsmarck and Countess Platen. An alarm of fire had been raised at the opera, and Königsmarck, anxiously crying out "Save the Electoral Princess!" had given her his hand, as he supposed, to take her out of the confusion, but in the darkness he had grasped that of the Electress Charlotte. As soon as he found out his mistake, he hastily deserted her in the midst of the crowd to rush to the Princess, and the Electress Charlotte was left alone for a few minutes till Prince Max, seeing her plight, came and extricated her. Afterwards "the Electress having made a jesting remark upon the incident, the Princess was deeply offended," and after this the cousins did not see each other.[1]

While Königsmarck was wasting the months in Hanover, spied upon by Countess Platen, and losing the esteem of his friends, his worldly position was daily growing worse. He was no longer able to play extravagantly or

[1] Leibniz (annotations on Hamburg pamphlet).

to pay high sums for couriers and horses, nor could he pay his "debts of honour," or raise ready money but with the utmost difficulty, for he found himself at length in the unwonted position of a poor man. His Swedish estates had, after fair offers and plain warnings, been confiscated by the King of Sweden, since the Count persisted in remaining in the service of the Elector of Hanover, with whom Sweden had for some time been on the brink of war, and Königsmarck's brother-in-law, General Loewenhaupt, hints at a perfect knowledge of the entanglement which kept Count Philip from resigning his post at Hanover in order to secure his fortune. "If he were a man one could put confidence in I would make overtures to him for an agreement . . . but . . . if he can make up his mind to follow good advice perhaps he can escape the circumstances which now are threatening." . . . "If Count Königsmarck will return to the way of wisdom he has plenty of means to do so." The worried Countess Loewenhaupt might well exclaim to her husband that "an honest heart can find happiness only in lawful love."

It seems possible that a wild scheme of flight was deluding the pair. Sophia Dorothea had dreamed of it already, and apparently supposed that she would be able to devote herself entirely to Königsmarck could she but escape from Hanover. He had greeted her first suggestion of the idea with joy and wonder: "What! you will devote yourself to me?" And he sometimes referred vaguely to a future time of bliss "when we shall be together," but he took no steps towards realizing it. That was in 1693, and in 1694 it was too late. He averred, truly, that he was losing his fortune for her sake, almost as if it were a merit, but the effect was that he was powerless to help either her or himself.

If flight were really in contemplation a place of refuge must be found, and no better refuge could have been

wished than Sweden, where Königsmarck had madly ruined his own position and fortune.

The only attempt he seems to have made to procure any means for escape must be assigned to the close of the year 1693, for he then went away from Hanover on a journey about his private affairs, but he seems to have returned unsuccessful. The only haven which the lovers could now dream of might be Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, and there Duke Antony Ulric, deeply resentful of Hanoverian ambition and pride, would no doubt have been willing enough to shelter Sophia Dorothea, for whom he always cherished a friendly feeling, though whether he could have protected her from her own father and husband may be doubted. He, at all events, intimated years afterwards that he had been expecting the fugitive pair, and they probably had made some sort of overtures for his countenance. It was just about this time that the faithful Fräulein von dem Knesebeck became so much alarmed by the Princess's projects that, after in vain trying to persuade her to relinquish them, she begged her mistress to allow her to leave her service rather than meddle in so dangerous a plot. If the plot were a scheme of flight from home and husband, the lady-in-waiting might well fear the fate of Moltke. Before the tears and entreaties of Sophia Dorothea, however, the tender-hearted Knesebeck gave way, and compromised her safety, as events were to prove, out of duty and devotion to her beloved mistress.

If Sophia Dorothea were to escape from Hanover she must, however, have some means of support in her self-imposed exile. Königsmarck could provide none; so she had begun to make serious complaints to her parents not only of her misery with her husband, but also of her penniless condition, in the hopes, as she explained to Königsmarck, that some independent income might now be assigned to her. In that case she would have the

money to provide means of flight—whether with or without Königsmarck—for that she actually intended to elope with him there is nothing to show: it is on escaping from her husband that she dwells in her letters.

She appealed in the first instance to her mother, who was in possession of certain revenues of her own, bestowed upon her by the Duke of Celle in earlier years. To her Sophia Dorothea made as much as she could of her husband's reluctance to let her stay with her parents; he had indeed once forbidden her to go, and had once grudgingly bidden her stay only for a few days; but she had not, it seems, any definite charge to bring against him save that of neglect and infidelity. George seems, latterly, at all events, to have wished to keep up appearances. Probably he had been made to listen to some remonstrance from his mother and mother-in-law. But when he visited his wife, wished to see the last portrait of her, or told her the Elector's compliment upon it, she took it all as done on purpose to annoy her and wrote at once to Königsmarck for sympathy. No doubt the Prince was some years belated, and, now that Sophia Dorothea had learned what passion was, would scarcely find it possible to heal the breach, caused originally by his own hardness and misconduct, by a few courteous speeches and conventional attentions.

Nevertheless, no evidence exists of actual ill-usage, nor of anything but outwardly correct conduct on the side of the electoral family. Had George maltreated his wife she would certainly have told Königsmarck, for she wrote every detail of her life to him, yet in neither her own nor Königsmarck's letters is there any allusion to such treatment. It is difficult not to suspect that Sophia Dorothea's continual complaints indicate only that she was so much absorbed in her passion for Königsmarck that every one who hindered her from seeing him or

writing to him appeared to her in the light of an enemy to be sneered or railed at.

This must be clearly understood, because a number of romantic tales about Sophia Dorothea and Königsmarck have obtained a sort of currency, although they rest upon absolutely no foundation save that of works of fiction. The tale of Countess Platen laying a trap with an embroidered glove for the Prince to find is an instance in point, while that of the Prince taking his wife by the throat has been amplified from a seemingly exaggerated charge of Knesebeck's.

The Duchess of Celle was moved by her daughter's not unreasonable complaints of the unfairness of her marriage settlement. As the whole of Eleonora's property was to go to Sophia Dorothea, or to her husband, in the end, it seemed but natural that she should bestow on her beforehand some part of the money. Accordingly the Duchess declared herself quite ready to sell enough of her jewels to raise a considerable sum, and, in the spring of 1694, consulted the friendly English envoy[1] about placing this money in the newly-established English funds. Evidently she was not, just then, very well provided with ready money, and it is curious that Mr. Cressett could not get a reply from home, though he wrote about the matter more than once; either by accident or design some hindrance was put in the way and the investment was never made.

Sophia Dorothea was always impatient; of the necessary delays of war or business she took little account, and on finding that her mother, though willing enough, was not able to satisfy her immediately, she betook herself to her father with clamorous tales against her husband, and a petition for an income of her own. Probably she could have chosen no worse time. The Duke of Celle's finances

[1] James Cressett, envoy extraordinary to the three courts of Celle, Hanover, and Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel from 1694.

had long since become embarrassed by the large sums he had paid to his brother to bring about this very marriage as well as by the extreme magnificence with which he had maintained his court. He had but recently been obliged to curtail a good deal of his previous lavishness, and the war, in which he was sincerely engaged on the side of the Allies, was going ill. Men and money were increasingly hard to obtain, and to give his daughter a fresh dowry was both out of his power and contrary to his wishes. He would certainly be of no assistance to her schemes. What wife had not something to complain of in a husband? he asked. For the sake of the grandson, of whom he was very fond, George William could wish for nothing but a reconciliation between the husband and wife whose quarrel was now threatening the peace and dignity of the family.

Prince George had not as yet made it evident that he considered himself to have grounds of complaint against his wife. They wrote to each other sometimes when he was on campaign, and occasionally he used phrases which, in the light of subsequent events, certainly seem sarcastic. He heard all about the fuss she made when she once found at Luisburg (the Elector's shooting-box near Brockhausen) that the stewards had assigned to Prince Max the room next to her own, which was properly Prince George's. Not a thing could be unpacked until the Elector was appealed to, to protect her from such impropriety. She wrote the whole story to Königsmarck, who must needs be pleased with her, she adds, "for I spoke dreadfully angrily"; and the Elector had sent word that if the suite were three times as large, it should all be kept for her. Max was very polite about it, she owns, but if the Elector had not settled it like that she would have spent the night in the rooms "kept nominally for my father, but really for La Platen," and would have left next morning for Brockhausen. If this

be a specimen of Sophia Dorothea's usual behaviour, she must have been very tiresome.

The true reason why she was so particular to avoid the proximity of Max was that Königsmarck had formerly been jealous of him—yet she wrote the tale to her husband as if her reason was one of pure dignity. His comment was, that his wife evinced the virtue of a Roman matron towards Max, and that he saw his honour was safe in her hands. Now, it was at Luisburg that Sophia Dorothea had held a secret meeting with Königsmarck.

On another occasion, too (in 1693), Sophia Dorothea, in the course of a letter to the Prince, had told him how the Duchess had given a knot of colours to Königsmarck for his standard, and she thought it very ill-natured of him to reply "you must have a great dearth of news to tell me of Madame my mother's gallantry, I feel sure that you followed her example"—and it must have been because he was cross about this (averred the Princess) that he told her she was not to stay with her mother at Brockhausen for long. Yet the very letter which relates all this to Königsmarck would have more than justified George's ill-temper or sarcasm, for it proposed a plan for securing a secret interview together at Brockhausen. Knesebeck is put in the small room next hers, she writes, so if only Königsmarck could come without being known there would be nothing else to fear. He could even stay a whole day without any one suspecting it—but then it is almost impossible that he should not be met by somebody who would know him, so she will say no more about it; although she wishes it with the utmost passion she would rather go without the happiness than expose Königsmarck in the least to danger.

There is no apparent reason to suppose that the secret sojourn took place, either then or at another time when she had made a very similar suggestion, any more than there is ground for believing that she ever made that

visit to Königsmarck's own house into which he had, much earlier, tried to inveigle her. The wish was there, but either timidity or something else apparently held her back from actually doing what she talked of. Neither had she run away in dudgeon from Luisburg to Brockhausen. Like her yearnings to shut herself up as if in a convent, "if only she could," or to run away from Hanover, these ecstatic outpourings are most probably imaginative schemes alone. "How happy you are to be able to follow your own inclinations in everything," she wrote to Aurora von Königsmarck; "I wish I were in the same position, but I cannot reach it."[1] She loved to dwell on ideas without taking any steps to carry them out; but it is not wonderful if those who read the letters should jump to the conclusion that deeds followed.[2] That they did not may, perhaps, be inferred from Königsmarck's frequent remonstrances with her upon her timidity. He wanted her to imitate her cousin Charlotte of Brandenburg—do as she liked boldly and let folks chatter, "for if they chatter enough people take things as a matter of course."

That the lovers had not, even in the beginning of 1694, concerted any definite plan, seems evident from the promptitude with which Königsmarck then seized an unexpected chance of retrieving his fortunes. His former boon companion, Duke Frederick Augustus of Saxony, then succeeded to the electoral throne of Saxony in consequence of the sudden death of his brother. The new Elector owed Königsmarck a huge "debt of honour," and the Count set off in hot haste to Dresden to

[1] 15th December (1693?) in Kramer's "Denkwürdigkeiten."

[2] The passage, in one of Königsmarck's letters, considered to be proof positive, occurs after a blank; the beginning of the letter has been torn off; thus the expression—"I slept like a king last night and I trust that you did so too"—is interpreted according to its apparent meaning: but, it may be, not justly so.

see if payment were forthcoming. Augustus welcomed him warmly. He could not pay the money, but he bestowed all that was as yet within his power to give—the post of major-general in the Saxon army, together with "an old regiment of cuirassiers." This seemed to be an earnest of hope, and Königsmarck at once resolved to live at Dresden. He invited his sister Aurora to come with him, but she did not then accept the offer. His family hailed his action as at least a move in the right direction, the more so that the court of Saxony had been for some years on unfriendly terms with those of Celle and Hanover, and it was just possible that the Count's transfer of his services to Dresden might pave the way to his forgiveness by the King of Sweden and a partial recovery of his property there. His brother-in-law, Loewenhaupt, thought his acceptance of the post the best thing he could do—"the way quickly to make his fortune, for, when he likes, his personality is charming and his conduct always pleases."

His change of service was known immediately. It was not an exchange to a different side in the war, for the new Elector—"this new Bear at Dresden," "the Madman at Dresden," as the English envoy terms him, also joined the Grand Alliance. Nor was the transfer to a different court any unusual occurrence. Marshal Chauvet, for many years a prominent official and courtier at Celle, had left George William for the Saxon service only the year before. Still, considering the state of tension which subsisted between Saxony and Hanover, Königsmarck's sudden action might not perhaps be considered very respectful towards Ernest Augustus. However this might be, his behaviour at Dresden was such as to place him at once in the wrong. The fresh and hopeful prospect and the renewal of old bad habits with former boon companions turned his head. He joined in the revels of the riotous court at Dresden, a by-word even in that dis-

solute age, and in his cups he babbled and boasted (as it was said), and allowed two dangerous names to pass his lips—that of the Electoral Princess Sophia Dorothea and that also of her rival, Countess Platen. The mention of either was an intolerable insult to the court of Hanover, and made it impossible for him to show his face again in that city with decency or with safety, for the report was speedily carried thither, and not only was the Princess hurt, but the dangerous Countess Platen had a lever with which to move the Elector whenever she chose.

From this point the course of the tragedy may be clearly followed in the letters of Mr. Cressett, those of Mr. Stepney, the English envoy to Saxony, and the papers of Aurora Königsmarck.[1] The Count was now a marked man; there was a definitely admitted reason for detesting him in Hanover and Celle, and his movements, as those of a person distinguished but suspected, were taken note of.

He heard soon enough of the injurious impression created by his indiscretions, and passionately denied to Sophia Dorothea that he had ever named her; but the sober asseverations of a man who has been drunk are not worth very much, and though the Princess might forgive and forget all his offences, others surely would not.

The extraordinary thing is the silent acquiescence of the Electoral Prince and his father in what was going on, whether at this moment or during the previous two years. Long before the insulting outburst at Dresden, it is clear that the intrigue was perfectly well known. Why was it permitted to continue? Why did no one but her mother and the devoted Knesebeck remonstrate with the Princess? Why did no one warn Königsmarck except his personal friends and his sister?

[1] Kramer's "Denkwürdigkeiten von Aurora von Königsmarck." *Cf.* Preface.

Sophia Dorothea herself had written to him that she had found out that the Elector's suspicions of him were aroused, and that she could neither sleep nor eat for grief and anxiety. Yet had Prince George or his father felt any wish to save Sophia Dorothea from being compromised by the fascinating man they had themselves placed in her company, they could have removed him from her at once. Did they wish to have a sufficient and overwhelming case against her? Odious as the explanation may be, it seems to be the only one which accounts for their extraordinary behaviour.

At the time when Königsmarck was in Dresden the Princess was making a prolonged visit to her parents at Brockhausen. She had been in ill-health and low spirits for some time; in April she was definitely reported to be ill, and she seems to have had (in the course of May, 1694) a final quarrel with her husband which impelled her to hurry to her old home and beseech her father to help her to separate from her husband. George had himself threatened—or promised—as much. Before they had parted he had declared: "It is too great a constraint; on my return I shall write to your father and I shall ask that we may separate."[1] What her husband's idea of separation was the wife had yet to learn; she pictured it to herself as release from her now unbearable position and freedom to spend the rest of her life as she chose. She found, as before, no sympathy from her father. But though the Duke of Celle would by no means listen to his daughter's prayer for a separation, he was obliged to let her stay for a few weeks at Brockhausen, for she was too ill to be moved without danger, and all he could do was to write a kind of apology to Hanover and urge Sophia Dorothea to return thither so soon as she was physically able to do so.

[1] See Adolf Köcher in Sybel's "Historische Zeitschrift," 1882, and for many other explanations.

Her husband had, in the meanwhile, relieved the Court of his gloomy presence and gone to pay an unusually long visit to his sister at Brandenburg, where, as his letters to his mother testify, he enjoyed himself very much, especially when the Elector of Brandenburg went from home and etiquette was laid aside. Then masked balls, private suppers, and perfect liberty became the order of the day. The Electress amused herself with several favourites, and so did her visitors and court. Perhaps safety lay in the number; at all events, though scandal was talked, no serious consequences ever ensued. He was still in this cheerful society when, on the 15th of June, Sophia Dorothea returned to Hanover, apparently quite restored to health, and seized the opportunity openly to insult her parents-in-law. They were then at Herrenhausen, and expected to receive from her the conventional visit of respect, a visit which might have been, in this instance, rather more than a matter of ceremony, for they had but just returned from Wiesbaden. The Electress had been recruiting her health after a serious illness, and she had suffered a relapse there which had caused much anxiety. "That good Princesse would be sorely missed if we should lose her," wrote Cressett; "I hope the contrary, for she is as vigorous as ever Prince Rupert was." "Her credit is not good in affairs, but I should be heartily sorry to lose her, for she loves England." She and her daughter-in-law had not met for several months, yet instead of alighting, as etiquette imperatively demanded, Sophia Dorothea ordered her carriage and escort to drive past the gates straight to the city, and retired to her apartments in the Leineschloss, whence it was at once announced that she had had a relapse, and at the end of the month it was understood at Celle that she would come back to take the waters at Wienhausen, a small health resort hard by that town.

But she did not come, for Königsmarck had returned

from Dresden. No secrecy whatever was or could have been attempted on his part. "Count Königsmarck must be with you by this time," wrote Stepney from Dresden to Cressett.[1] "He is made major-general here and is expected back again shortly." And Cressett reported to England three days later that "the Prince Electoral is gone for Berlin and the Princess is sick at Hanover. Connigsmark (whom God will confound) has left this service and serves on the Rhine in the Saxon troops this summer."

Now Cressett's righteous indignation was certainly not because Count Königsmarck had left the Hanoverian service, neither can it indicate a prophetical knowledge of the catastrophe about to happen. Cressett was an honest-minded, humorously-disposed gentleman, sincerely attached to the worthy Duke of Celle—"my old Trojan," as he calls him, who was "turning up his nose to the wind every day to see how it sits," and whether it would blow the English fleet expeditiously to the continent, and was out of humour all the time it continued contrary to King William and the Allied cause. Cressett sympathized with his Duke and Duchess in all their anxieties, and thought that they admitted him to their confidence. "The good old Duke of Zell loves me only for drinking and commending his champagne, which is the best that ever was tasted," and it seems that sometimes they "tipled champagne these seven days" together. But the envoy was rather coldly critical of the Hanover Court, although he allowed that the "splenetic" Elector was "of excellent sense and many great qualities," and we cannot but conclude, from his severe expression, that he had learned something of Königsmarck's conduct, which, in fact, was now matter of almost general knowledge.

Königsmarck had been obliged to return to Hanover

[1] 13th June (23rd June, N.S.).

upon necessary business, for he had to make arrangements to transfer himself finally from thence to Dresden. For one thing, a month's pay was due to him, and this he drew, according to subsequent statement, between the 28th of June and the 1st of July.

He was reported to be selling his house for 25,000 cr., "but we cannot doubt that the money will vanish like lightning," as a friend observed to Aurora, which seemed very likely, for he was preparing with lavish ostentation for his removal to Dresden. His steward was charged to collect as quickly as possible a magnificent retinue of twenty-nine domestics in livery, besides a number of other workpeople, and a costly coach, besides necessary wagons, with a train of fifty-two horses and mules. This princely transport service was actually collected, and was almost ready to convey him and his household to Dresden when, on the night of Sunday, July 1st, Count Königsmarck left his house about 10 o'clock, and disappeared for ever from human ken.

His household, however, felt no uneasiness for a day or two. He often went out secretly and stayed long away, and he had already been away from home from the previous Wednesday until Saturday morning. But when the third day dawned the Count's secretary, Hildebrand, became alarmed. His first thought was that his master had perhaps been stabbed, and he went to consult Marshal Podewils, "a good friend, I thought, to all of the name." The Marshal made light of the occurrence, and bade him keep quiet for a day or two longer, but one day was as much as Hildebrand could stand.

By that time a dark rumour had certainly reached him, and on Thursday he sent word to Dresden of the new major-general's disappearance. On Friday he wrote a long and agitated letter to Countess Aurora at Hamburg, which he sent by a faithful messenger, not daring to trust it to the post. He says that if he must own his real

thought and suspicion, he thinks he shall not find his master alive; and here was he, poor Hildebrand, left "in the liveliest anxiety a mortal man can be in" with the responsibility of all those servants and animals; they must be dismissed quickly, unless a miracle brings back "him whom all my life I shall mourn with hot tears."

The honest secretary was certainly already convinced of his master's death and of the exact manner of it, and was overcome with consternation. "A Saxon general loses his life in so fearful a way, at which I shudder, in the midst of the Residence in perfect peace-time, in a place where they could have met him, if they wanted to meet him, before his acceptance of his new post; what a black, terrible, horrible deed of darkness!"

Königsmarck's chamberlain, Rüdiger, could add but little to the tale, when, a year later, he made out for Aurora a statement which is supposed by most critics to be adorned by his imagination, though upon what grounds it is hard to say. It was he who saw Königsmarck go out on that Sunday night, in a sort of disguise, as he says, dressed in poor, gray clothes with a brown rain-coat thrown over him. When on Wednesday the secretary suspected danger it was Rüdiger whom he asked whether he knew of any letters which might compromise the Count. Rüdiger said he did. There was a preciously kept packet of letters in a casket, which must be of importance since they were carefully tied up and the Count always took them about with him. These Hildebrand desired him to pack carefully and *send to Celle, i.e.*, in order to be delivered to Aurora there.

Evidently both men knew more than they dared to put in words. Were not these the Princess's letters, which Aurora thus got possession of at Celle; the very letters now preserved at Lund?

Rüdiger added that on the Friday, July 7th, secretary Zacharias was sent by the Elector to open the rooms and

writing-table, and afterwards sealed all up again, and that same day came one "Adjutant Lawareck," with a tale that Königsmarck was still alive, a prisoner in the house of Countess Platen!

This is the assertion which has been held to invalidate Rüdiger's account, but exactly the same sequence of news reached General Loewenhaupt on the Rhine and the English envoys at Celle and Dresden—first, positive information that the Count had been murdered, and that in some peculiarly horrible way—next, assertions that he was still alive, which they did not believe.

"Connigsmarck's commerce with our Electoral Princess is now all come out (wrote Cressett[1] from his post at Celle), and it is murder as bad as that of his brother's upon poor Mr. T.[2] Connigsmarck's papers have all been seized and the Princess and her letters discovered. She is undone and her father and mother will hardly outlive the disgrace. I am in their confidence and comfort 'em all I can, you may be sure, for better Princes or people there cannot be upon earth."

Whether the Elector or Prince George or Countess Platen was actually the moving spirit of the catastrophe cannot be ascertained; nor is there much point in the question. So successful and silent a removal, in the midst of the palace, of a notable person who was also an excellent swordsman, must have been preconcerted, and that it could have been preconcerted without the Elector's definite knowledge is impossible. Neither could the subsequent steps, so rapidly taken, towards the disgrace of the Princess have been begun without her husband's directions. The evidence against Countess Platen is only that of rumour, but of rumour which was immediately and everywhere insistent. Countess Loewenhaupt

[1] To Ellis, 13th July.

[2] Mr. Thynne, murdered in London by the bravos of the elder Count Königsmarck.

and Fräulein von dem Knesebeck assert that she was concerned in the murder, and Leibniz does not deny it.

Louis XIV even asked the Duchess of Orleans in public whether it was true that, when the Electoral Princess was approached about a reconciliation with her husband, she demanded that first Countess Platen, "her accuser," should be removed from court. The Duchess's denial is, of course, no evidence one way or the other, but the same statement was made in a pamphlet (to be mentioned by and by) and left undenied.

That the Countess had looked to her own interests in the ruin of the Princess is clear enough from the determined attempt she made, directly it was accomplished, to secure an influence over George by resuscitating his old passion for her sister.[1]

It seems that a slight failure in the Elector's health had occurred in 1694;[2] he either was ailing, or gave himself out to be so—the latter, thought the English envoy, who smiled at his threats of resigning and considered him "very imaginary in respect of his health." The Electress, as before mentioned, had been seriously ill in the winter of 1693-4, and both had betaken themselves "to the Waters, at Wiesbaden." Any prospect of a change in the succession cannot but have been extremely alarming to the Platens. They were not sure of favour from George, and they were very sure of enmity from Sophia Dorothea, whenever she should become Electress. If she attained to that position, however little credit she might have with her husband, she could no longer be a nonentity in the court circle, and Countess

[1] The Elector and his son made "a literal partie quarrée at Luitzbourg" with the two ladies for some while. (Cressett, June 24, 1695) "I must write anecdotes if I write anything from these Courts."

[2] The Duchess of Orleans expresses her anxiety at the accounts of his ill-health.

Platen and her family might find themselves more or less deposed from their commanding position, while, even if the Elector remained in good health, should the Electress Sophia die the Electoral Princess would be the first lady of the court and no longer to be ignored.

Once Electress, Sophia Dorothea would probably be safe from attack, and once at Dresden Königsmarck would be out of reach, so that Countess Platen had every motive for striking at once, if she wished, as it is hardly doubtful she did wish, to revenge herself upon the Count and win a victory over the Princess.[1]

The Elector's conduct would seem to have been precisely that which he had pursued towards Max. He gave latitude enough for the culprits to entangle themselves hopelessly, and then caught them. As for George, he always struck without warning.

Of the details—in what manner Königsmarck was lured to the fatal spot in the palace, in what way he was slain, or how his body was disposed of, we know nothing for certain.

The gruesome circumstances which have often been related come out of the romances, and rest upon little or no other evidence. But those who had the best means of information, Königsmarck's secretary, his brother-in-law, and the agents of England and France, were immediately convinced of a brutal murder. St. Simon wrote it down in his Memoirs[2] that Prince George had ordered the murder, and that the Count was seized on his way from the Princess's apartments and flung at once into a hot oven—which seems to be another version of the tale that he was stabbed and flung into quicklime in a com-

[1] The annotations of Leibniz on the pamphlet of 1695, while they deny that Countess Platen "ordered" the murder, made no denial of her claim upon him and desire for revenge. *Cf.* A. Köcher, *loc. cit.*

[2] But the passage was certainly written, or altered, several years after the event.

partment in the basement, and the place walled up at once.

Count Loewenhaupt could only write to his wife from the seat of war (2nd August) of his distress at her brother's death, and that he understood "it was a terrible fate which could not be sadder"; nor did he give any credit to the repeated stories that the Count was alive in durance;—how a certain Captain Grote overheard a lady and gentleman whispering—"How is it with Count Königsmarck; is he still alive?" the gentleman replied: "He is still living, but he cannot possibly last much longer." This was in August, and in September came yet another whisper that he was still living, a prisoner in the Platen's house, where they were trying to cure him of his wounds; but Loewenhaupt had, to be sure, more interest in his brother-in-law's death than in his life, which may account for his contemptuous disbelief. His one concern was to see that his wife claimed her brother's inheritance instantly. It was Aurora who came with her sister, Countess Loewenhaupt, to Celle and to Hanover demanding her brother; and, being there treated with very scant courtesy, hastened next to Dresden to inflame Augustus the Strong against the murderers. She continued there for many months "beseeching for her brother, as if he were still alive"; until at last (in November, 1696) she saw, writes her sister, a man who told her for certain of Königsmarck's death, under such dreadful conditions as deeply dejected her. Yet, said Countess Loewenhaupt, she still entertained a faint hope that he might possibly be still living, "or, at least, had died of his wounds." Countess Loewenhaupt herself had never had any doubt, she says, but that her brother was dead —"*he was a martyr to the frightful hate of la Platen.*"[1]

Neither of the English agents, Stepney at Dresden and Cressett at Celle, in the least doubted that the Count had

[1] Letter to her husband printed in Kramer.

been murdered. Cressett, indeed (July 27), mentioned the rumour at Hanover that "Connigsmark was not quite finished but only run twice or thrice through the body and is yet alive." But he indicated that he attached little importance to it. Stepney, at Dresden, wrote that he apprehended that "Daggers and poyson will be as familiar with you as they are in Italy. Your Princes [*i.e.*, the Brunswick Dukes] have been often there and may have learned the manner of the country of dispatching people without noise. A servant or two of Königsmarck's run frequently betwixt this place and Hanover (as I have heard Count Berlo's dog did betwixt the camp and Brussells after the Battle of Fleurus) seeking out for their master but have no tydings."

Stepney felt certain that the Count was long since dead, and that, even if his body should be found ("which I believe as little as that of Moses"), the circumstances of the murder would be left as much in the dark as that of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey. "His sister raves like Cassandra and will know what is become of her brother; but at Hanover they answer like Cain that they are not her Brother's keeper."

Stepney, who composed his letters carefully, was rather proud of this production, and sent duplicates of it to at least two other correspondents; he was at some pains, too, to intimate that he had always thought ill of "the sparke," but then he was just as certain that all Aurora wanted was to get hold of the money the Elector of Saxony owed her brother, after which no more would be heard of her, and in this his cynical diagnosis proved at fault.

Augustus the Strong was moved by the grief of the beautiful Aurora, who subsequently became his mistress, and mother of the celebrated Marshal Saxe; he had certainly received an insult in the removal of his officer, and his resentment was hardly likely to be smoothed over

by the arrogant reply from Hanover, whither he had at once sent an envoy "to prevent the blow if it was not already given." The Hanover case was, that Königsmarck was still in the Hanoverian service, since he had not resigned his commission nor presented his accounts, and had drawn his pay three days before he was missing, and, hence, if he could be found, the Elector of Hanover was at liberty to deal with him as a deserter.

The Dresden court shrewdly opined that Königsmarck must really be dead, or the Elector would not profess perfect ignorance; however, they threatened to take more active measures and "discover [*i.e.*, reveal] what will amaze the whole world." The Elector of Saxony had, in fact, now got an admirable pretext for the attack upon the new Elector which had so long been threatening, and he was loth to forgo it. A European agitation seemed to be set going; from the Hague to Vienna and from Paris to Stockholm there was no court but addressed letters, questions, or advice to Hanover. The affair threatened to become an international one, and might even affect injuriously the Grand Alliance, for the Saxon threats became so loud that Ernest Augustus felt it necessary to prepare for hostilities, and contemplated recalling his troops from the Rhine. It took the intervention of the Emperor and the King of England to allay the fury of "the madman at Dresden."

This agitation was a great deal more than the Elector of Hanover had reckoned on, but he was nothing if not dignified, and doggedly maintained his attitude of virtuous ignorance. "They say it's not possible to give any account of a man that goes out misdoing at midnight, and may be lost a thousand several ways," quotes Cressett. And so soon as the Elector of Saxony consented to return to the normal ways of diplomacy, Ernest Augustus acted in the most correct manner. All the costly property of the missing man was delivered up to

the representatives of his next-of-kin, duly sealed by the Elector of Hanover's officials, and conveyed by them to Aurora at Brunswick. Antony Ulric seems to have been the constant protector of all who were aggrieved by his kinsmen at Hanover. There it was at once inventoried, and finally conveyed away by Aurora when she took up her residence at the "Abbey" of Quedlinburg.

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CHAPTER III

CAPTIVITY

NOTHING could be said by the would-be avengers of Count Königsmarck of the unhappy partner of his guilt or folly. But the violence of the storm aroused by his catastrophe could only render her predicament the more perilous. She was the source of all the trouble, and there is no doubt that her father was bitterly incensed. "The poor unlucky Princess," writes Cressett, "has dishonoured and shortened the lives of the best father and mother that ever were; I am grieved for the parents, and could wish some allowance were made for the passions of human nature, with its frailty in the fair sex when seduced by the tongues of ours." But such allowance was the last concession to be expected at Hanover.

In truth the removal of Königsmarck had been the first step towards the removal of Sophia Dorothea. Proof of actual infidelity had not been obtained, but the letters seized at Königsmarck's house were, of course, evidence of the intrigue, and possibly may have borne testimony to an intended flight. They were shown to the Duke of Celle, who "would never have believed her so guilty had it not been for the letters"—guilty of what nobody specified; for the old Duke it seems to have been sufficient that in some of her outbursts, written when he had refused to help her, she had sneered at him, her father. "He is doting (she wrote); it is a sign that he will live a

long while yet." This is the worst that is quoted. But there cannot have been any proof in the captured correspondence of such guilt as would of necessity justify divorce, or, as subsequent proceedings showed, it would have been used. A divorce could only be pronounced by a tribunal which would certainly demand evidence, and, unless glaring proof could be produced, the Princess would be questioned, and then her accusations of her husband would be heard. Convincing proof was needed, and as it was not forthcoming, it was necessary first to keep Sophia Dorothea silent, and next, to find such a plea as should secure her conviction as the culprit, without argument.

In consequence, vigorous attempts were made to procure sufficient evidence. Fräulein von dem Knesebeck was seized and kept a close prisoner. If possible, she was to be made the principal witness.[1] Count Platen interviewed her before the council, and tried to bully her into an admission of her mistress's guilt. She, however, indignantly denied the imputation. Königsmarck had never so much as had an interview in private with Sophia Dorothea. She denied that there was any "plot" at all. They would not be able, this time, to make out a case of high treason. Platen told Bernstorff that her replies were so much like those of the Princess that they must have agreed upon them together. "The next examinations will make her speak differently (he adds) and no doubt break down her firmness." She was told that people knew—people had seen; she demanded to be confronted with them. "Yes, yes, they should be fetched,"

[1] *Cf.* Beaucaire, "Mésalliance"; Köcher (see Preface); Kramer's "Denkwürdigkeiten"; and the "Brief Narrative of Particulars, etc." The last two cannot be roundly dismissed as forgeries, in many points they are borne out by accessible letters of Platen and Bernstorff. They probably are coloured by Knesebeck's and Aurora's partiality and the interval of ten years or more between the event itself and their descriptions of it.

but they never were. She was threatened with sharper methods—with torture; but the intrepid lady persisted that though they might kill her, she could not reveal what had never happened; the Princess was guiltless of all wrong-doing. The Princess's other ladies and her servants were also questioned, but nothing damaging could be got from them; either they were deeply attached to Sophia Dorothea, or they really knew of no wrong-doing, and, considering how much was known, this absence of incriminating evidence is striking.

The plan was next adopted of making Knesebeck bear the blame as Moltke had borne it for Max. She was hurried in secret to prison, and instructions were drawn up for the diplomatic agents of Celle and Hanover defining the tale which they were to tell at Vienna, London, Stockholm, and in all the German courts. They were to say that there was no connection whatever between the "still inexplicable disappearance" of Count Königsmarck and the coldness which existed between the Electoral Prince and Princess. Fräulein von dem Knesebeck (the envoys were to say) had inspired the Princess with so much dislike to her husband that she at length refused to meet him, and wished to withdraw to Celle before he came back from Berlin. Her father, however, refused to permit her to come to Celle, and she had "withdrawn for the present to the magistrate's house at Ahlden, which lay on the way." Such was to be the official version of the estrangement between George and his wife.

Ahlden, however, was far out of the way from Celle to Hanover, or from the way to anywhere, and Sophia Dorothea was really in strict confinement. Fräulein von dem Knesebeck, staunch as ever, was sent to close imprisonment at Hellerspring, but she was secretly removed from thence to the old fortress of Scharzfels, in the Harz mountains. She was not brought to any sort of trial; a

public execution not being desired this time, she was simply to be buried in oblivion for the rest of her life, and her testimony to Sophia Dorothea's innocence would be thus suppressed. It was long before her family could even discover where she was, and quite in vain that they petitioned either for her release or the restitution of her property. It was apparently not worth the Elector's while to take up a correct attitude towards a mere lady-in-waiting.

Burying Knesebeck alive, however, brought the disgrace of the Princess no nearer, and the object of the heads of the family was not only to shift the blame on to other shoulders, but to get rid of Sophia Dorothea with a completeness which should permit of no future trouble, and the method they adopted was a triumph of malicious genius.

It was known, of course, that she had implored her father to help her to separate from her husband; she was even now imploring the same thing. If, instead of enquiring into her reasons, her expressed desire could be interpreted as in itself an outrage upon her husband, the thing would be accomplished. George, the deserted husband, could pose as the injured party and the undutiful wife must be condemned. All was thought out by the two prime ministers, Platen and Bernstorff, who had twelve years before drawn up the wedding contract, and is revealed by their letters to each other.[1]

Just a fortnight after Königsmarck's disappearance, and while George was still doggedly amusing himself at Berlin, they settled the line to be followed. The Princess is *not* to be told (as had been suggested) that, "in order to save appearances," she should declare she would not live any more with the Prince. Platen thinks "we can manage to give out that report without suggesting it should come from the lips of the Princess"—for she,

[1] *Cf.* A. Köcher.

of course, would have given her reasons which would make it difficult for George to keep up the attitude of the injured husband.

On the very same day, 15th July, the Electress Sophia was writing one of her charming letters. She took a cheerful, if cynical, tone. "On the Wood-market (Countess Platen's house) where they hear all the news they say that Königsmarck was carried off by the Dresden witches, for he has vanished now for a fortnight. . . . My son is enjoying himself with his sister very much, he does not know of what has happened here and will be very much surprised. But he must console himself like other heroes. The Prince of Condé fared no better and he had a wife of the same kind."[1] She adds significantly that next Carnival *the Princess will not be there* to dispute precedence with the Princess of East Friesland. George's imperviousness to the news which was the gossip of Europe must indeed have been dense; and the supposition that his wife could be dealt with as an accused criminal without his cognizance is, on the face of it, absurd. The statements of the Hanoverian court, composed to save appearances, must not for a moment be treated as real evidence. The more confidential letters of the Electress to the Duchess of Orleans were all destroyed at the request of George I.

A month later the storm had risen higher, and the Electress sat down to indite the now official account of the affair—for she thinks the whole world is "talking of the goings on here, but you can't stop folks' tongues." "The Königsmarck affair (she continues) was like this: he was gloomy in the evening and pretended he was going to bed, but his secretary saw that he went out all alone, and when he did not return for four days [really three] they went to Marshal Podewils and told him their master

[1] Alluding to the Princess of Condé, with whom Henri IV had been infatuated.

was lost. They hunted for him everywhere but could not find him. The Duke had his things sealed up, so that nothing should be taken, but they took his correspondence. . . . We must take comfort in thinking that God does all for the best. If the wife cannot endure her husband she is better from him than with him." "Knesebeck, who set so much mischief going, is, I hear, in prison."

Of the treatment which was accorded to Sophia Dorothea herself, the Electress, naturally, said nothing. Her first captivity in the gloomy fortified grange of Ahlden was represented as a concession to her persistent prayer to be allowed to leave Hanover, for Ahlden lay within the territories of Celle. She had been impatiently awaiting her removal for a fortnight, a close prisoner in her rooms in the Leineschloss, deprived of her faithful Knesebeck, surrounded by unfriendly eyes, at the mercy of Count Platen's coarse and malignant questions, and, worst of all, she had been left for days in ignorance of Königsmarck's fate, for she wrote to Councillor von Bussche a day or two after the murder and before she was yet fully aware of her own position: "I tremble lest the Count has fallen into the hands of a certain lady [*i.e.*, Countess Platen] as she would injure his life. Have the kindness to inquire into this matter, I shall wait for a few days to ascertain the poor Count's fate. In the meantime I rely on your discretion, for I am incapable of helping you in my present state." But it was not till the 17th of July that she was removed to Ahlden.

She then, at last, gave way to the anguish of despair. Her mother was forbidden to go to her, and could only send the Protestant pastor of Celle, M. de Casaucau, who did his best to help her towards a religious resignation. Less kindly visitors were Bernstorff and Bülow, the ministers of George William, who came to endeavour to extract from her an admission of guilt. They told her:

"that all was discovered and it was now useless to deny anything," supposing that in her despair she would make some important admission. But poor Sophia Dorothea only, in general terms, expressed the deepest repentance. She humbly acknowledged that she had done very wrong and was justly punished, but she said that she hoped by meek submission to win mercy from the Elector. When pressed more particularly, she indignantly denied that Königsmarck had ever been in her private apartments at night, that she had ever committed "le crime," though she straightforwardly owned that appearances were against her. All they could get from her for their purpose was her demand to be parted from her husband, since "she despaired of ever overcoming the aversion the prince has for several years evinced towards her." They noted that she seemed to be afraid of him. The poor princess added that if she might be allowed to withdraw from "the world," she hoped she should show as much example of piety as formerly she had of scandal.

Now it is clear that the expressions of contrition and humility which Sophia Dorothea used, both in speech and letter, at this time, though they might, otherwise, have been taken as admissions of actual guilt cannot be so taken, since she combined them with most solemn protestations of innocence. By the *scandal* and *wrong-doing* for which she expressed such deep penitence she, quite certainly, meant either the love she had cherished for Königsmarck and her correspondence and intercourse with him, or her scheme for running away from Hanover. It should be considered whether the ardent expressions of her letters to the Count may not also admit of two explanations. She was in the habit of using extreme terms, as when she abused her father for his refusal to help her. There are one or two phrases in Königsmarck's letters which would be most obviously explained by the supposition of guilt; but these, too,

may possibly be interpreted without that assumption; it is not certain that they must bear the construction which is naturally placed upon them; and the consistent life-long declarations of Sophia Dorothea and of the brave Fräulein von dem Knesebeck should at least have some weight in considering the final judgement. In any case, the representatives sent by the husband and father-in-law tried their best to get either evidence or confession of guilt, and if they could have got it the divorce would have been pronounced on that ground.

The worthy English agent at Celle, though he certainly thought her guilty, grew more and more pitiful, and more condemnatory of the Hanoverian conduct, with every post: "You may rest assured that at Hanover we understand and value Macchiavelli above the gospel and we avow 'tis a folly to be *cattivo a mezzo* [wicked by halves] we shall go through with the work you may believe it."[1] "Our unlucky scene lies as it did, the divorce goes forward and we are all to be quite shamed. I have been twice a-shooting with this Duke just by the walls of the house where his daughter is confined."[2] "Our princess is going to be transported into the Hanover country, first to be divorced and afterwards God knows what. This is a tragical scene and would make both men and women resolve to live virtuously."[3]

Later on he became less positive and, observing that "the scene is perfectly Italian," concluded that the actual truth was concealed and the Duke and Duchess of Celle kept in the same ignorance of it as others.

That a divorce was inevitable must be granted. Neither husband nor wife could endure life together, nor, after the publicity which had overtaken the Königsmarck affair, could the ducal house tolerate a dubious position which might possibly in the future permit a slur to be

[1] 10th August, 1694. [2] 14th August.
[3] 21st August.

cast on the line of succession. Already the Jacobites in England and France were dubbing little Prince George "Young Königsmarck," an absurd insult, though, after all, only a retort in kind upon such as still affected doubts of the parentage of "The Pretender."

Separations for incompatible temper, however, were not yet known, and Hanoverian pride required that the whole blame should be thrust upon the princess of Celle. Count Platen could safely be left to conduct the case, resentful as he long had been of Sophia Dorothea's contempt for his own odious position. He had already secured the co-operation of Bernstorff, who intended to be George's minister in the future, and had for years subserved the Hanoverian interest and thwarted the Duchess of Celle. All they had to do was to settle the terms which should best secure to the Electoral Prince the inheritance of his wife, and render her powerless either to create annoyance or arouse sympathy or suspicion in other courts. Their line was to construe her prayer for separation from George as a deliberate "desertion" of him, and to procure, in consequence of it, and for his sake, a decree of divorce which should fix upon her the guilt of a contemner of divine and human law.

Sophia Dorothea was removed from Ahlden to Lauenau, in the Hanover territory, while a lengthy judicial process was worked out by a tribunal consisting of a president and eight members, four Protestant clergy, and four lawyers, half of them furnished by Celle and half, as well as the president, by Hanover, before which court the prince and princess were each represented by counsel. The exact sentence had already been drawn up by Platen and Bernstorff, who then skilfully cajoled the tribunal into pronouncing it. "It must not be discovered that we have beforehand drawn up the terms of the decision," Bernstorff admonishes his colleague.

Sophia Dorothea was under the impression that the

separation which she longed for would set her free from the trammels of court life in Hanover, to retire somewhere into privacy. This had been her delusion throughout, and she readily signed a declaration drawn up for her, to the intent that she was resolved upon separating from her husband, and conferred full power to act in her name upon Councillor Thies, of Celle, the lawyer assigned to her in this travesty of justice. To make quite safe, however, Bernstorff got her to sign further declarations, and commanded Thies to feign illness, that he might be absent when sentence was pronounced. The clerical judges, however, were honestly trying to be fair, and, knowing better than the Princess what conclusion would be wrung from her statements, they insisted upon going to see her, much against the wish of the two ministers. Unhappily, Sophia Dorothea was quite deceived by Bernstorff, and, as usual, blind to her real friends; she would say nothing to the good pastors but that she held to her resolution, and they retired, unwillingly, to let the strict course of the law take its way. The Hanoverian representatives now demanded a sentence forbidding the princess to marry again, which meant condemning her as a criminal, and only at this point were the representatives of Celle stung to some resistance. Councillor Thies honourably strove his best against such a sentence, and even George William was roused out of his obstinate apathy by his wife's despairing efforts. But the moment was gone by when the Duke of Celle could have influenced his child's fate. He had consented to the trial and must hold by the result. Ernest Augustus came to stay with him for weeks together, to remind him how completely he had agreed to all the proceedings, step by step. When the Elector was absent Bernstorff kept guard, and his alarming representations beat down the occasional impulses of fatherly pity:—the succession of young George Augustus must not be endangered; the

fortune to which he was entitled must not on any grounds be diminished; Sophia Dorothea must be kept from doing harm, and the courts of Saxony and Wolfenbüttel checkmated. Finally, on December 28th, 1694, the court pronounced the sentence arranged for them by the two ministers so long before: a decree of divorce, a second marriage being forbidden to the princess, but permitted to the prince.

The actual punishment now meted out to Sophia Dorothea of strict and hopeless imprisonment in the grange of Ahlden was, of course, no part of the sentence, it was merely the tyranny of the strong hand over the helpless. What public opinion existed in Hanover was always on the side of the Duke, and if the sympathy of Celle lay on the other side it was unavailing. The whole resources of the two duchies were even now practically in the hands of the Elector, as they were afterwards in those of his son, and, as we have seen, if they chose to behead one nobleman and murder another, or to imprison a couple of women for life, there were absolutely no means of resistance. It was a result of well-organized despotism, which paid much attention to propriety, profit, and convenience, and was scrupulously careful of legal formalities, but under no obligations to abstract justice, and as Ahlden lay within her father's duchy, she was nominally under his protection.

So the princess was thrust back into her prison and ignored, almost as if she had never existed. Her name was struck out of the State prayers, and never spoken in Hanover. Every token of her presence was removed save a few portraits at Celle, two of which are said somehow—no doubt through the duchess—to have got into the possession of the young prince George, who kept them hidden during his father's life. Neither of the princess's children was ever allowed to see her; her father did not try to do so, her mother only obtained

leave after vehement entreaties. It is difficult to resist the conclusion drawn by the Vicomte de Beaucaire:[1] "Whether she were guilty or not mattered little, they wanted no more of her. They had had to be bribed to take her; she had given children to assure the succession; they had got her money; they had made certain of her inheritance, and that was enough."

The divorce had been pronounced just as the carnival of 1694-5 was about to begin. Mr. Cressett was much shocked, "but they cannot live here without it, they are a sort of people that can rejoice even in their own disgraces." The princess of Wolfenbüttel then lay dying, as did Queen Mary in England, and the envoy felt out of tune for masquerading, but only the Duchess of Celle abstained from the merriment which, as usual, went on for the whole of Lent, "with all the undecent and unseasonable rejoicing that is possible. I think 'em as little in their senses as at Dresden. The Duke of Zell has been at Hannover halfe of the time and the other with his Dutchesse at Zell. The divorce was finished but the day before their frolicks began here. The sentence was pronounc'd upon malicious desertion . . . those who don't like the proceeding say there is a nullity in the manner of it, that those persons were no competent judges, and that the Princesse may appeal to the Emperour whenever she pleases. She is still confin'd . . . the dutchesse bears up as wel as possible."

It is good to know that anybody ventured to express an opinion adverse to the tyrannical proceedings, but it was not likely that those at Hanover who had made such skilful use of the forms of law would be likely to leave their prisoner any means of pursuing technical methods. She was not only without money and influence, but without so much as a faithful servant to convey a letter.

[1] "Une Mésalliance dans la maison de Brunsvic."

The reason alleged for the strictness of her imprisonment was that there was a design for abducting her! Saxon troops were on the march: she was scheming to fly to Poland: young Prince Louis of Wolfenbüttel was going to carry her off. In reality Sophia Dorothea was lying ill and helpless in her prison, and must have felt, as Mr. Cressett did, that "it had been happy for her father and mother and her self if she had gone out of the world when she went, this time twelvemonth, from hence to Hanover."[1]

However, they kept on "frightening the good Duke with ridiculous stories about his unlucky daughter that there is a plot to carry her off by armed force. . . . It keeps the Duke from relenting to her, which his good nature would induce him to." In May they "sent a small engineer from Hanover, to throw up a little dirt and stick in a few pales, which they call fortifying Ahlden, where they keep the Princess a prisoner. Wackerbach (her jailer) often alarms the garrison with a body of men coming (in disguise) to carry her off. It must be the Emperor in the moon that sends 'em, for they cannot now pretend but that Saxony has something else to doe."[2]

If there was any effort made to communicate with the poor prisoner it came from Wolfenbüttel, where old Antony Ulric had not forgotten his former favourite, of whose guilt, as he had written to the Duchess of Celle, he did not feel convinced. But the gaolers were too vigilant. The sturdy groom whom they caught loitering about the grange had, however, a plausible story about an attachment to a waiting-woman, and no capital was to be made out of him. It was not until July, 1695, that it was considered safe to allow Sophia Dorothea to breathe the air outside her prison walls, and then but for half an hour a day. Just about that time, too, some

[1] 21st May, 1695. [2] Cressett.

overtures were made about a reconciliation; in all likelihood they were but a pretence: at all events they led to nothing.

"The Princesse writes most patheticall letters to the Dutchesse, but whatever impression they may make upon the mother I think they doe but little with the father," wrote Cressett. The Duke would not yet permit his wife to see her daughter, or the latter to write to himself. All he would do was to send her word, in a letter written by the Duchess, that he "had forgiven her," in order that her mind might be at ease when the Sacrament was administered. The forlorn woman was, indeed, turning her mind to the consolations of religion. Nor had she ever quite lost the reverence of early years. In her letters there is never any touch of the profane scriptural allusions or the smart cynicism so frequent in the letters and speech of the others—from the intellectual Sophia to the coarse Königsmarck. She had always had a lurking dread of the punishment which would be entailed by wrongdoing, and she now perhaps began to regard her troubles as a divine judgement, to be submitted to with patience. "That unlucky Princesse . . . is now in reall pennance and devotion. Hannover has made a pretty good hande of this match. She brought 'em in land of purchas'd estate 50,000 crowns, besides jewels which they are now takeing from her and she is pack'd off with about £800 a year in bad rents."

The loss of the fortune which had never been hers but nominally was assuredly the least of Sophia Dorothea's sorrows. It was the separation from her parents and her children which was bitterest; and though at length her mother wrung permission from the two dukes to visit Ahlden, the prisoner was never allowed to see her children again. Later in life their portraits were her most precious treasures. Both were young—George twelve, and his sister seven—when disgrace overwhelmed their

mother, and their education now depended upon the capable hands of the Electress Sophia. What impression the fate of his mother made upon her son is not known. Talkative though George II usually was, no word on this subject is certainly recorded to have fallen from him. The younger Sophia Dorothea instructed her children that "the duchess of Ahlden had been less guilty than imprudent"; but no doubt, as her cool-headed son, Frederick II, afterwards observed, "her own virtue would not permit her to speak otherwise of her mother, and every child who thinks rightly must as much as possible cherish illusion on the faults and vices of its parents." At Hanover their mother's name was never mentioned to either of Sophia Dorothea's children. She was banished from the minds of her family as if she were long since dead. From the moment of her disappearance at Ahlden their busy life had gone on its accustomed round without the slightest hindrance or hesitation. The crowded activity of amusements and politics was livelier than ever, much to the inconvenience of poor Cressett, whose government was a bad paymaster. He once expressed a wish that Godolphin would come over himself and "try for a month or two how pretty 'tis to keep a great family without money and *rowl* eternally." "I have lived now almost nine months with the Duke of Zell's heath-cocks by providence," he complains, and begs for "a little sprinkling on these thirsty corners." It was a necessity, of course, for the political agents to be ever on the move with the courts, and Cressett had to keep on the most friendly terms he could, not only with the princes of Celle and Hanover, but with those also of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel; and this explains his intimate acquaintance with the family history. The three courts were seething with French intrigue, for Louis XIV did not despair of detaching them from the Grand Alliance, and his agents were always well supplied with money

and gave handsome presents and entertainments, which enabled them to count upon "so great a number of small tools to work with in these courts." Cressett was sure that there was "not one true friend to England in the three courts, for the women we must not reckon" (*i.e.*, the two duchesses). Yet things would be still worse, the envoy thought, if they quarrelled amongst themselves ("unity alone can support this family," as Colt observed), whether over Sophia Dorothea or over Max, who was at this moment making a fresh agitation about his claims, supported, of course, by Antony Ulric. Though he was considered the stupidest of the brothers, Max was the only one who succeeded in bringing his father to think it worth his while to offer a substantial bribe, and he at length departed to the wars in northern Italy in receipt of a handsome allowance. If this might be considered something of a concession to his son and the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, it was likely that Ernest Augustus would be but the more inflexible in the case of Sophia Dorothea. He was, of course, bent solely upon his own objects; the Grand Alliance or Louis XIV were to him but levers to the accomplishment of his great purpose. He was still "moving heaven and earth over the Primogeniture which is jumbled with the electorate," and making people believe "once a year" that he meant to resign and go and end his days in the beloved city of Venice. This was not at all to the taste of his subjects or his family, and the threat usually brought them round to his wishes. He even tried to get William III to guarantee "the primogeniture," and had the assurance to ask the Duchess of Celle to use her personal friendship with the King of England to that end. His interests lay wholly in Germany, and he cared but little for the prospect of the possible succession of his family in Great Britain.

This succession was as yet hypothetical, for the Prin-

cess Anne's fragile little boy, the Duke of Gloucester, was yet living. Possibly he might live to grow up, and in that case, it was suggested by the Duchess Eleonora and William III, a match between the Duke of Gloucester and the young Sophia Dorothea might be a good plan. George shared his father's indifference, or worse, to the English succession, and was cold, even adverse, to the suggestion. It was the Electress Sophia who entered into the other grandmother's views for the future of the grandchildren, and she took care that they should, at least, be able to speak the tongue which to her was almost natural, but which her son had refused to acquire.

There is something completely ironical in the compulsory acquisition of the Britannic monarchy by George I. Ernest Augustus and his son had concentrated their energies upon the creation of a powerful Hanoverian state, due to their own exertions alone. They had secured a perfect despotism, admirably served and with a good army at its beck, which it was George's real pride to lead. To ensure the unity and dignity of his territories, the son had blasted his domestic happiness and immolated his unhappy wife, while the father had exiled son after son and spent years of laborious and costly diplomacy. Yet just when George was firm in his Electoral seat and ready to play a leading part in German politics, a dignity was thrust upon him from without so much greater than that his family had achieved by its own exertions as completely to eclipse the cherished Electorate and its rule of primogeniture, and even to threaten his removal altogether from an active part on the beloved German stage by transferring him to a merely constitutional throne where he could neither kill nor imprison, tax nor go to war, without the consent of a host of agencies outside his control, and where his dignity made him so precious that he would never be able to lead his troops to battle again. And this uncomfortable glory was by no means

owing to any action of his own or his father's, but (oddest of ironies) solely to the family relationships of the Duchess Sophia, who, whether as wife or mother, had been so carefully relegated to a position of "no account in affairs." Possibly the final bitterness of George's distasteful and splendid cup was the lurking knowledge that his new subjects were thoroughly disappointed that his mother did not survive to be their sovereign, and that they preferred to himself his hated son, the son of the hated Sophia Dorothea. George always saw the mother in his only son, who is said to have resembled her in his youth, and that was probably the original cause of the detestation in which he held the talkative, boastful, and rather foolish young Prince.

Ernest Augustus had but just secured the success of his lifelong scheme when, in 1698, he died, to the grief of his pleasure-loving subjects. His son, the Elector George, hardly shone in comparison with him. "It is no wonder," wrote the sharp-tongued Duchess of Orleans to one of her cousins, "that pleasure is no longer to be seen in Hanover, as in the last *régime*, for this Elector is so cold he turns everything to ice, which his father and uncle were not. It will get worse with time if the Elector has the settling of it, for he knows nothing of what is princely as I have seen in all his doings." Her cousin must not be surprised that he did not ask after her, "for he never asks after anybody . . . he piques himself on not being courtly—and you see it plainly in his court."

Hopeless as the occasion seemed, Sophia Dorothea availed herself of the excuse his accession afforded to write to the new Elector and to his mother in terms of utter submission, seeking to win a partial forgiveness. She wrote to George that she hoped that the depth and sincerity of her repentance might soften His Highness's heart, and if to crown his mercy he would "permit me

to see and embrace our beloved children, my gratitude for this boon, so ardently longed for, will be infinite since I desire nothing else to enable me to die content." To the Electress she wrote: "I beseech once more your Electoral Highness to forgive all I have done which may have offended you and to speak a little on my behalf to your son the Elector. I implore him to grant me the forgiveness which I desire so intensely and to allow me to embrace my children. It would also be my passionate desire, Madame, to kiss the hands of your Electoral Highness before I die."

But no answer came to the letters. No penance and no length of time could soften George's vindictiveness. When, in 1714, on his departure to London, an effort was made by his family to induce him to relax something of the harshness of Sophia Dorothea's imprisonment, he refused absolutely. It seems to have been an additional grievance that his son and daughter joined their entreaties to those of their aged grandmother of Celle. Could George I have relented it might possibly have mitigated something of his unpopularity in England, where his treatment of his wife and his relationships with his German mistresses were matter for scurrilous pamphlets and ballads such as he was totally unacquainted with in decorous and obedient Hanover. But he cared nothing for the opinions of his new subjects, and fresh entreaty, being an annoyance, only hardened his vindictiveness. He had, at all events, a double pleasure in thwarting the hopes of his detested son as well as those of his wife and her mother.

More fortunate than her mistress was the faithful Eleonora von dem Knesebeck, and the adventures of that courageous lady deserve a passing mention. She was imprisoned, in 1694, in the ancient fortress of Scharzfels, on the edge of the Harz Mountains, a place formerly used as an impregnable retreat by the earlier dukes of

Brunswick, but now become a state prison. It was but a few miles from George's pleasant castle of Herzberg, where, as Electoral Prince, he sometimes held his Court, graced, however, never by the presence of his wife, but only by "his ladies," as the Electress Sophia termed them.

Scharzfels was built upon the top of fantastically splintered crags, which rose steeply from a green slope, high above the tree-tops, and the tower was only to be reached by a drawbridge from the uppermost story of the residential portion of the castle. From her window the hapless lady-in-waiting might see far below the plains of Hanover spread out for many a league, like a vast map, but never could she hope to escape from such an eyrey, and, as the commandant had particular orders to keep her safely, she was allowed no more attendance than that of one decrepit old woman. There she was to remain, hidden till she was quite forgotten, and at last would die.

But a nearly three years' confinement in her single chamber neither killed the brave woman nor broke her spirit. She wrote all over the walls of her room her indictment of the Elector's injustice and cruelty. Having no other means of writing, she had taken charcoal from the chafing-dish and inscribed her complaints and reflections, scraps of verse, and scripture texts, on the walls and door, and even on her bedstead. "The government must have done a deed of great injustice since they stop my mouth, for if they can answer to all the world for what they have done in the Electoral Princess's affair, why am I not to speak? If their judgements are righteous, how should I dare to speak wrongfully?—I, a poor girl, an obscure girl, against an Elector! . . . Then why does the government stop my mouth by force? What are they afraid I shall say? It follows that they have certainly committed a great injustice, so they suffocate and oppress

me with power, injustice, and force, that their injustice may not be proclaimed." She further stated what her own experience of Hanoverian justice had been: Platen, Hugo, Bernstorff and Bülow had all declared that she had "perverted the Princess," that she had "sown jealousy and enmity" between the Crown Prince and Princess, and that her maid had accused her of intending to poison George. (The ground of this particular calumny is to be found in a "leading question" addressed by Platen to one of the servants, who replied that Fräulein Knesebeck had once bidden him get some rat-poison—and that indeed there were many rats in her room; but when he was further asked if he had not fetched "aqua regia," he said no.) Indeed, the statements and accusations of Fräulein Knesebeck quite terrified the beholders who first examined these depositions and copied them for the Elector's information. But that was not for a long time. At the end of two years and a half, in the autumn of 1697, the prisoner was one day startled by a slight sound at the window; a letter was hanging there at the end of a line of packthread. It told her that a trusty friend, a loyal servant of the family, was preparing to rescue her. He had bided his time until he could obtain employment at the castle as a tiler, and he shortly succeeded in making a hole in the roof through which, towards the evening on the 25th of October, he let himself down into her room. He was provided with coils of rope, which he made fast at one end in the room, and then he lowered her eighty feet down into the castle ditch. He followed safely himself, and they made their way quickly along the winding forest tracks, through the heart of the mountains, to friendly Brunswick. So certain had the commandant of Scharzfels been of her security, that the escape was not discovered, nor the hue and cry raised, till a whole night and half a day had passed. Fräulein Knesebeck wrote to tell Countess Loewenhaupt of her escape on the

12th of November, but she would not say where she was going.

Great was the storm at Hanover! The unlucky commandant was put in fetters and threatened with death. All the explanation he could offer was that the escape was certainly the work of the devil, since nobody else could have reached the prisoner; the hole in the roof, indeed, almost proved the theory, and it was a long time before they dared so far to interfere with Satan's handiwork as to mend it.

Three months later Fräulein Knesebeck wrote from Vienna that the Emperor had promised her his protection, and so had staunch old Antony Ulric at Wolfenbüttel; still, Countess Loewenhaupt thought she should be very careful not to leave Brunswick again, when she once got there, without taking very great precautions. She felt it wise to take the step of declaring herself a Catholic, in order to have a stronger claim on the protection of the Emperor, and she lived a life of quiet obscurity till 1706, when, on the marriage of her dear mistress's daughter, the younger Sophia Dorothea, to the Crown Prince of Prussia and Brandenburg (afterwards King Frederick William I), she entered the service of this young princess and went with her to Berlin. The daughter could hardly have performed a more decisive and graceful action than this of giving an asylum to her mother's devoted servant. But it was the utmost that she was able to accomplish. Whatever her wishes may have been, Sophia Dorothea of Prussia was in the power of a brutal tyrant, and incapable of affording any help to her captive mother. She corresponded with her, but necessarily in secret, and no doubt this interchange of letters became the keenest interest of "the Princess of Ahlden's" later years.

By that time a decorous ceremonial had long regulated every action of Sophia Dorothea's weary life. After the

alarms of the first years of captivity had died away—it was even rumoured, after Knesebeck's escape, that the Princess had fled and reached Poland[1]—she was now and then allowed to receive visits from a few insignificant strangers: sometimes a charitable pastor's wife, sometimes French refugees, to whom the Duchess of Celle had been a providence, would formally pay their respects to the princess, and probably would perceive little or nothing of the rigour of her imprisonment beneath its gilded ornament. Nobody was to be able to point to obvious harshness and stir up sympathy. So the princess was provided with a small train of elderly and discreet ladies, and a considerable attendance of men-servants and guards, all of them spies and gaolers. She had permission to write letters, but the Governor of Ahlden read all her correspondence and that of her little suite. A large allowance of money was paid to her, but out of it she had to defray the salaries of all these servants and spies, and she might purchase, by letter or commission, what jewels or tapestries she liked. But she might not leave the few apartments assigned to her in the castle, might not walk outside the walls lest some friend, if she yet had any such, should exchange a sign with her, might not visit the humble village, which was nominally her domain, and from which her melancholy title of "Princess of Ahlden" was derived. Her only appearance in the outer world was when she took her drive along a certain reach of the straight high road in her state carriage, surrounded by a guard with drawn swords. She would always have the horses driven at the top of their speed, though she might never pass the limit assigned for her drive, and this was the sole relief from the monotony of her existence.

In this solitary mansion in the midst of a doleful plain, without one personal friend or trusty servant, was she

[1] Where Augustus of Saxony was now King.

immured for thirty-two years. She was only twenty-seven when she first entered its walls, heart-broken by the death of the man she loved, and her awakening from the stupor of despair was to the realization of a solitude among spies.

The passage of time was marked by the inevitable changes among her family, but of these only the echoes penetrated her prison walls. The death of the Elector Ernest Augustus in 1698, and the ministerial changes made by his successor, entailed the decorous withdrawal of the Platens from court, and the Countess was already in the clutches of a dire disease, but their fall from power could now make no difference to the prisoner. In 1705, the year of her son's marriage to the charming Caroline of Ansbach, her father died. She had never seen him since her disgrace, eleven years before, although she had actually been transferred to his castle at Celle, for safety, on the occasion of the march through the district of some Saxon troops in the French interest (in 1700), who possibly might have freed her from her prison. In consequence of this, Sophia Dorothea was for many weeks constantly with her mother, yet her father sternly refused to recognize her presence. It was only a year or two before his death that natural feeling began to reassert itself, and that he expressed to wish a see his only child again. But he consulted Bernstorff, and the minister scared the old man by hinting at fears for the Duchess's fate, in the future, should the Elector George be offended. So the Duke, without relinquishing his idea, put off its realization, and Bernstorff succeeded in continually postponing it, till at last George William went on his last hunt, caught a final chill, and died without having seen Sophia Dorothea.

His death made the Elector George sole sovereign of the combined territories, and he took up the reins of power at once. With his son by his side he made a

splendid state entry into Celle, escorted by ministers, prelates, and the assembled knighthood. Bells were rung and divine service was attended in the city church, where George William's monument was preparing, and then the procession betook itself to the banqueting hall in the castle, built by George William for Eleonora and Sophia Dorothea. Whether as a protest or by a mistake *three* chairs of state had been prepared, but George ignored the incident; the empty chair must have fired the indignation of many a worthy burgess. The death of her father and the concentration of all power, legal and actual, in her husband's hands, extinguished the last faint chance of procuring any amelioration in the lot of the prisoner. George's accession to the duchy of Celle, indeed, made her condition rather worse, for the Duchess of Celle was compelled to go to live in her distant dowerhouse at Lüneburg, and its distance from Ahlden and the very bad country roads formed a serious obstacle to her visits to her daughter. At the cost of suffering, however, the mother still came, and even in 1706 made a visit to Hanover in order to witness the marriage ceremonial of her grand-daughter, Sophia Dorothea the younger, of whose wedding she could then tell the princess at Ahlden. It was not until some years after George I's departure to England that he permitted the aged Duchess to return to her old home at Celle, where she lived very quietly with a few French friends, and continued to visit her daughter up to the last year of her life, 1722. After that the "Princess of Ahlden" was absolutely alone.

She still, however, continued the round of occupations which she had been able to devise for herself. What scanty scope there was for her benevolence she used to the utmost. She had the village church rebuilt when it was burned down, she sent help to exiled French Huguenots in Holland, she succoured bountifully the

poor of whom the pastor told her whenever, at long intervals, he was allowed to see her. She bestowed gifts and pensions liberally upon her father's old servants and carried out her mother's wishes, so far as was possible, when she too passed away. She has been sneered at for ordering patterns of rich materials from Holland, for purchasing jewels and asking for her father's service of silver plate, and for her elaborate daily toilet and observance of etiquette; but with what other toys could the lonely creature fill the long hours? She does not seem to have been fond of cards, neither did she care for reading, though she may have turned over the odd little collection her mother sent her from the Duke of Celle's library—a collection consisting of very heavy works on history, sundry technical sporting and military books, and a few old-fashioned romances.

She showed herself devout, and always attended the castle chapel among her guards, never failing, or so it is said, when the sacrament was administered, to make a solemn protestation of her own innocence. She spent much time in writing, not only letters but volumes of elaborate accounts, and she is said to have composed a kind of autobiography or report of conversations, in which she set forth her own justification, but how such compositions can ever have found their way to any hands but her husband's it is hard to see, since she was surrounded by his creatures. It is well known that all the official documents and all the statements dealing with that famous trial, even all the Electress Sophia's letters, so far as they could be found, were carefully destroyed, by George's orders—a proceeding which does not tend to strengthen belief in the official explanations of the Hanoverian court. On the other hand, a great deal of fiction was composed, and passed off as genuine, by those who first had the opportunity of investigating such records as remained. The "dialogues" purporting to have been

written by Sophia Dorothea are at all events of a very vague character, and convey surprisingly little information.

Even after her mother's death the poor princess still clung to a hope of ultimate release: she was conducting a secret correspondence with her daughter, the Queen of Prussia, in which she characteristically chose to combat the queen's favourite scheme for the marriage of her children, and she was also planning to realize a large sum of money at Amsterdam through the agency of a certain Count von Bahr, which was being accomplished in the year 1725. Her daughter warned her in vain of the treachery of some of her agents. Sophia Dorothea, as usual, still believed firmly in the wrong people, and continued to confide in these thieves till the revelation of von Bahr's perfidy was at last brought home to her. It deprived her of her last hope, and therewith of the power to live.

In the autumn of 1726 she fell seriously ill, and her ravings, in the fever which consumed her, were of her husband's cruelty and wickedness. At length she sank into a gloom which was almost lethargy, even the pictures of her children, said her ladies, produced no alteration in her expression, and on the 13th of November she lay dead.

The court of Prussia went into decorous mourning (Frederick William I expected that his wife would inherit her mother's money), and in Hanover and Celle it was observed as a matter of course till the rancorous order came from the Elector-King in London to repress all expressions of grief and ignore the "Princess of Ahlden" in death as in life. She was to be buried in her prison. But, as it happened, the inundations rendered this impossible, and at length, to avoid longer delay, the coffin was removed at dead of night to the church of Celle, where it was placed in the ducal vault beside those of her parents. All that the staunch citizens could do to

express their respect was to meet the little cortège with torches, and witness the deposition of the unnamed coffin in the ducal vault. The mean vindictiveness of George I refused to allow either her name or her mother's to be inscribed even on their coffins, far less in the church above. To this day his spite challenges the visitor to the historic church where above the chancel rises the splendid monument of Duke George William. His kneeling effigy faces towards a blank space left for the figure of his wife to be placed there in due course of time. But when the Duchess died George was in possession; he had grasped at last all her fortune and her daughter's, and he forbade any memorial to be placed in vault or church. The empty space alone attracts the eye. "She was not of rank sufficient fittingly to have her effigy set there," the custodian still repeats with conviction.

It only remains to point out how difficult it is to form a final opinion upon Sophia Dorothea's case. Not only did George destroy all the authentic papers of the trial, but he and his ministers sought out every document bearing upon it for similar destruction. Whatever those letters contained which the ducal agents found in Königsmarck's apartments, they seem now lost for ever; even the Electress Sophia's letters of that period written to her trusty Leibniz were destroyed. No evidence was to remain which could invalidate the official account agreed upon by the court and ministry of Hanover. But that official account, published at foreign courts, and dutifully repeated by the Electress, is so far proved to be false that it is impossible to trust to it in any particular. The only contemporary evidence of first-hand value consists of a few letters which passed between Platen and Bernstorff, and the notes made by Councillor Thies, which were kept by his family, and these—already quoted from above—throw the most sinister light on the proceedings of the victorious party. As for the asseverations of the Duchess of

Orleans, her vehement abuse can scarcely be taken for more than the ebullition of clever spite, except for the incidental reflection that she wrote these spiteful outbursts to her beloved aunt, the Electress, with the conviction that they certainly would not displease her. Perhaps it is worth noting that her principal indictment of that "cursed beast," Sophia Dorothea, is *à propos* of her absurd unreasonableness. How could the Duchess of Celle, she asks, expect any other sort of fate for her daughter, when she had given her such a bad education—bringing her up "with such ideas," for "what husband in the world is there who loves only his own wife?" Does not this duchess know, she asks, that faithfulness is the honour of women, but the honour of a man consists only in that of his wife? The "bad upbringing" of Sophia Dorothea was, it seems, her training to expect domestic virtue in the husband as well as in the wife.

But the problem is obscured, not only by lack of evidence, but by a flood of unauthentic narrative. Volume upon volume of pretended memoirs, secret histories, life stories, and the like, were poured forth, in Germany and in England, for a century and a half, each purporting to reveal the actual truth of the mystery. For so far were the Hanoverian ducal family from attaining success in their supposed aim of concealing the family misfortune by their process of murder and incarceration, that it not only became at once the most famous scandal in Europe but remained a favourite one for generations. Some seventy years later, Frederick II of Prussia could be shown the very stairs on which Königsmarck was seized, and expressed his hope that evidence might still be found, lurking in some forgotten corner, to reveal to him the veritable story.

The opinion which is adopted can therefore be little more than an induction from defective evidence, the most suggestive testimony being perhaps a pamphlet which,

about two months after the declaration of the divorce, was issued from Hamburg, then a flourishing Free City and a place of fashionable residence, where the sister of Fräulein von dem Knesebeck (Frau von Maitsch) and the sisters of Königsmarck frequently resided. This pamphlet was no doubt inspired by them or their friends. It professed to tell in brief the exact story. A copy of it, apparently the only one which has escaped destruction, reached the Duchess of Orleans, who summarily branded it "an abominable lie," and sent it to Leibniz to examine and correct. Leibniz methodically annotated it with "false" against certain statements and corrections written of others, but the principal assertions of the paper he did not deny. From these uncontradicted statements and the additional notes made by Leibniz himself it would appear (1) that the quarrel of Sophia Dorothea with her cousin, the Electress of Brandenburg, was of considerable moment in her disgrace, but that Königsmarck's bragging at Dresden was the last drop which caused the cup to overflow; (2) that Countess Platen was incensed by Königsmarck's refusal to marry her daughter and that she was bent upon revenge; (3) that the letters found in Königsmarck's house induced the Duke of Celle to abandon his daughter to punishment on account of her abuse of himself; and (4) that Sophia Dorothea, when she was first approached by official accusers or interrogators did make the demands alluded to by Louis XIV and denied by the Duchess of Orleans, viz., that Königsmarck should be set free to prove his innocence, that Countess Platen should be removed from court, and that her husband should treat her better. These do not read like the demands of a consciously guilty woman.

It is clear from the correspondence of the Hanoverian ministers that the letters they found had passed between Königsmarck, Fräulein von dem Knesebeck and her sister Frau von Maitsch, but we know that Sophia Dorothea's

letters went under cover of those of her lady-in-waiting. Some of them came from Dresden, *i.e.*, they were the last letters between the lovers, whose extant correspondence, preserved at Lund, breaks off a little while before his journey thither. But these letters, of course, remained a profound secret, and the pamphlet put forth from Hamburg by the friends of the weaker party seem to have been promptly suppressed.

The first account of the story of Sophia Dorothea which obtained a public hearing appeared in the year 1707, and became instantly the accepted version. It was due to the tenacious Duke Antony Ulric. All his political plans had sadly miscarried; but he succeeded in revenging himself at length in the domain of literature upon the hated and victorious Elector George. Antony Ulric was already known as a polite author. He was a cultivated prince rather proud of his aesthetic acquirements, and had given to the world a variety of hymns and two voluminous pseudo-historical romances. To the superior astuteness of the Elector George he owed the complete defeat of his grandiose political schemes, and an exile of four years from Brunswick. When he was allowed to return, a beaten and powerless old man, reigning almost on sufferance, he added (in 1707) a sixth volume to the lengthy romance he had before published, called the "Roman Octavia," and this additional story proved to be an embellished account, disguised by Latinized or Italianate names, of the catastrophe of Sophia Dorothea. The innocence and pathetic fate of the so-called "Princess Solane," is fully set out in the stilted narrative; Knesebeck's fidelity, George's brutality, the wickedness of Countess Platen, the treachery of Bernstorff lost nothing by the handling of Antony Ulric, and gave immense gratification to numbers of courtly readers. As the old Electress had observed some years before, "You can't stop folks' tongues." Everybody found out the real

names. George himself, with cynical humour, furnished a key to the inquisitive Duchess of Orleans (he attached no importance to literature, as is well known), and from that time the story of the Duchess of Ahlden became a literary possession.

As time went on the insufferable style of the "Roman Octavia" banished it from the shelves of readers, but its substance was borrowed, repeated, and amplified by a host of successors. All these books profess to be veracious, but nearly every tale is traceable to Antony Ulric and his successful revenge. Thus a collection of legends exists for the modern reader to select from; and the usual mode is to choose the interesting ones and brand the rest as obviously false. That the Duchess Sophia made a sudden journey to Celle to persuade the Duke to his daughter's marriage with George—that Sophia Dorothea and Königsmarck had been lovers in childhood—that George II when a lad had tried to "swim the river at Ahlden" (presumably the little ditch) in order to reach his mother—these and most of the other favourite dramatic incidents are, alas, fictitious, and come from Antony Ulric's romance and from nowhere else.

The utmost that can be said is that the veteran novelist had the opportunity of obtaining information from Fräulein von dem Knesebeck and Aurora von Königsmarck, to both of whom, as well as to the Duchess Eleonora, he proved a constant friend. But, on the other hand, he had a bitter animus against the ducal family of Hanover, and certainly made out the best case possible for the unhappy wife of George I. It is not possible absolutely to reject or absolutely to accept his story as a whole. His picture, for instance, of the malign and powerful influence of Bernstorff, so often set aside as impossible, is fairly well corroborated by that statesman's own correspondence, and the remarks of French agents;[1] whereas his descrip-

[1] *Cf.* Beaucaire and Köcher.

tion of the Duchess Sophia's zeal for the marriage has been demonstrably proved pure fiction. That the "Brief Narrative of Particulars," purporting to be by Fräulein von dem Knesebeck, contains this incident need not be held necessarily to discredit that paper; for if she wrote between 1710 and 1713 (as stated) she was in close connection with Antony Ulric, and she must have trusted to him, or at least to other persons, for what happened before she herself went to the court of Hanover. She was a sentimental lady, an enthusiast for her mistress; and she certainly seems to have believed devoutly whatever Königsmarck and Sophia Dorothea told her.

At all events, the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel secured his revenge upon George, for, whatever sober testimony may offer, the legend of the martyred wife is hardly likely to disappear from recollection, though Antony Ulric, who created it, may be completely forgotten.

George I had been so solicitous for the health of his imprisoned wife that rumour maintained that a "prophecy" had once warned him that he would not survive her long. Nor, in fact, did he. He died on his way to Hanover, near Osnabrück, in 1727, seized with illness in his travelling coach. A few weeks later the courts of the continent were entertained by a sensational tale that a letter from his dead wife had been flung into the king's carriage, and had actually produced his sudden death.

On her deathbed, this story ran, she had written a last protestation of her innocence and a solemn rebuke of his cruelty, and had summoned him to meet her before the divine tribunal within a year and a day. The letter was, of course, entrusted to "a faithful friend" (but where was such a person beside the prisoner of Ahlden?[1]), and this

[1] A certain Frau von Malortie had been permitted to join the princess's retinue by the latter's especial request—George's one concession—but she was a lady of a family specially trusted by the

friend, unable safely to deliver it in England had waited until George's visit to Hanover made it possible to place the missive in his very hands. The King was accustomed to receive petitions in this manner, and, supposing this letter to be one, accepted and opened it. He read the startling challenge of the dead and injured woman, and the shock flung him at once into a fit in which he died.

Perhaps it might not be difficult to think of one or two persons whose resentment might lead them to fabricate such a letter, and have it thus delivered, but that nothing was whispered of it until some eight weeks after his death certainly suggests that the whole tale was a myth. It has come down to us through the report of an ardent Jacobite, Lockhart of Carnwath, who heard that it was no secret among the Roman Catholics of Germany though the Protestants hushed it up as much as they could. At all events, concluded Lockhart, sagely, whether true or not, there were evidently still friends of the princess, or of the Prussian court, who hated George fiercely enough to be ready to blacken his character by spreading the tale.

George's character was surely dark enough without the aid of fiction. In every personal relationship of life he stands detestable. A cold son and selfish brother, a coarse sensualist and a vindictively cruel husband, he extended his unswerving hatred to his son and to that son's illustrious wife. He even used his grand-children as the tools of his malice, and succeeded in bequeathing to his descendants, for four generations, the gloomy tradition of family hatred.

Elector. It is just possible that one Christopher Chappuzeau, son of George William's secretary, Samuel Chappuzeau, said to be an attached servant to the Duchess Eleonora and her daughter, may figure as the prisoner's one friend.

CAROLINE OF ANSBACH

QUEEN OF GEORGE II

BORN 1683; MARRIED GEORGE AUGUSTUS, ELECTORAL PRINCE OF HANOVER, 1705; PRINCESS OF WALES, 1714; QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, 1727; DIED 1737

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Caroline of Brandenburg-Ansbach
Wife of George II
From a portrait by Charles Jervas in the National Portrait Gallery

CAROLINE OF ANSBACH

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

"THE Good Queen Caroline"; "the wise Queen Caroline"; "Caroline the Illustrious":—such epithets from the lips of cynically critical contemporaries who resented or affected to despise the new German monarchy, were far from meaningless. For the presence of such a woman as Caroline of Ansbach beside the helm of the English state during ten years of anxiety and turmoil, both the dynasty and the nation indeed owed a debt of gratitude, and there were those who felt and even expressed it.

The marriage of George II, in 1705 still Electoral Prince of Hanover, was in every respect of happier augury than the disastrous union of his father, and the early career of Caroline presented no less contrast to that of the unfortunate Sophia Dorothea. Caroline's childhood experienced some unhappy vicissitudes, but her girlhood was for the most part spent in a pleasant and intellectual education. She met with just enough of adversity to develop her almost heroic power of self-control, and she was an accomplished and tactful woman of twenty-two when she married into a family where she was already known and beloved.

An uneventful but by no means easy term of nine years was then spent in Hanover, awaiting and preparing for the momentous transference to England, after which great event the wider scope presented to her intel-

lectual powers afforded a satisfaction which certainly was a considerable palliation even to the trials and disappointments of her later life.

Caroline was born at Ansbach on the 1st of March in 1683, the same year as her future husband George, while King Charles II still sat upon the throne of England. She was only four years old when her father, the Margrave of Ansbach died, and when she was nine her mother married the Elector John George IV of Saxony, and carried her little daughter to the court of Dresden. Probably the child saw but little of the ways of that surprising and dissolute court, for the Elector was never on good terms with his wife. He died in 1694, and two years later Caroline's mother died also.

The Margraves of Ansbach were a branch of the Hohenzollern house, the head of which was Frederick III,[1] Elector of Brandenburg, and Caroline's father had named him as her guardian, rather than the young Margrave of Ansbach, who was her half-brother. The Elector and his wife Sophia Charlotte had already made the little princess's acquaintance when visiting her mother's castle of Pretsch on the Elbe, and now that she was left an orphan at thirteen years old they brought her to Berlin and the Electress assumed the care of her further education. It was a happy circumstance for the beautiful, high-spirited girl. Her charm and talent made her a favourite with both Frederick and his wife, the brilliant daughter of the old Electress Sophia, and in the intellectual company which often gathered round the Electress of Brandenburg, Caroline's natural gifts were well cultivated. She obtained an initiation into both the politics and the philosophical speculations of the day, and Leibniz, the learned friend of the Hanoverian family, professed himself almost as much devoted to her as to his two beloved Electresses.

[1] In 1701 he became King Frederick I of Prussia.

The constant intercourse between the courts of Berlin and Hanover gave the young Princess another friend in the Electress Sophia, still ready to add another to the number of the young relatives to whom she became a much-loved guide and confidante. Twice a year regularly the mother and daughter Electresses used to stay together in Berlin or Hanover, and Caroline, almost as dear as a daughter to Sophia Charlotte (who had no daughter of her own), was treated as a favourite grandchild by the old Electress, to whom, in truth, she bore much resemblance in mind and in ambition, as well as in her lively and sarcastic humour—fond of a laugh at the expense of others, as Leibniz remarked.

Caroline was lovely in face and particularly winning in manner. Her fair hair was abundant, her eyes were very expressive, and her hands delicate. Her beauty, grace, and accomplishment caused her to be very early renowned as one of the most desirable on the list of the marriageable princesses of Germany. She was but fifteen when a suggestion came from a quarter no less august than the court of Vienna that the Emperor's second son, the Archduke Charles, might possibly accord her his hand, but not till 1704 was a formal proffer made.

The Archduke Charles was at that time titular King of Spain, being the candidate on whose behalf the Grand Alliance had begun the Spanish Succession War in 1702, and though his crown had still to be won it seemed at that time—it was Blenheim year—not impossible that the sword of Marlborough, conquering Spain in Germany, might place the prize upon his brow. For an orphaned and portionless princess the prospect of an archducal circlet, with or without the possibility of mounting to the throne of Spain, was a brilliant one, and all that she had to do to secure it was to become a convert to the Roman Church. This was, of course, an almost conventiona pro-

ceeding. Princesses always adopted the religion of their husbands, nor was any shock occasioned by political "conversions" in those times. Perhaps one of the best known anecdotes of the Electress Sophia is the legend—apocryphal, no doubt, but *ben trovato*—of her reply to a courtly inquiry about the form of faith professed by her young daughter, Sophia Charlotte: "She has none as yet, we are waiting to see whom she will marry." And it is a fact that when two of her sons in the imperial service were approached about changing their creed, Sophia wrote that if the Pope could promise a good bishopric for one of them that would be some solid reason for the conversion.

The proper procedure for converting a royal bride was to hold a few religious disputations in her presence, after which expositions of scripture would be rendered by a divine of eminence, and the lady would duly announce herself converted. This had been the course taken with the Electress Sophia's beloved niece, Elizabeth Charlotte, when her father had compelled her to accept Roman Catholicism and the hand of the Duke of Orleans, and the process was now to be conducted for Caroline. Her friends were already prepared to congratulate her, though the old Electress could not repress her regret that the brilliant prospects of "the dear Princess of Ansbach" must so soon separate them. She could not help wishing that Caroline had not consented to the proposition, for then perhaps she *might have made the court of Hanover happy*. Sophia had already indulged hopes that her volatile and rather shallow-pated grandson George Augustus might secure her charming young favourite: "But I do not think God will let me be so happy," she sighed. It was a misfortune, she ruefully added, that the Jesuit who was commissioned to hold the disputation was so much cleverer than the Protestant pastors who were to meet him, as to be certain to win easily in

the arguments. When, however, the arguments had gone on for a week, the Electress ventured to allow herself the pleasure of writing the news that "our lovely Princess of Ansbach has not determined yet to change her religion, and in that case the marriage comes to nothing." It came to nothing. Caroline insisted on conversing herself with the learned Orbanus, and he did not convince her, nor did another zealous missionary, who, as she complained, worried her with letters by every post: she really thought him answerable, she jestingly added, for an illness from which she suffered for several weeks. In short, all would not do, and Caroline, portionless princess as she was, actually in this manner declined the splendid offer made to her from the imperial house. The Archduke Charles never became King of Spain, but he lived to become Emperor,[1] that Emperor Charles VI whose "Pragmatic Sanction" was thereafter to plunge Europe into the Austrian Succession War. It is interesting to speculate whether his schemes might not have been more sage and more successful could Caroline with her wise counsel have been at his side.

Dignified and ambitious as was the prospect which the Archduke Charles could in 1704 hold out, it might not unreasonably be thought to be counterbalanced by that which went with the hand of the Electoral Prince of Hanover, of whose wishes Caroline was probably not unaware. Three years earlier the sovereign and parliament of England had vested the succession to that throne in the line of the Electress Sophia,[2] not that such an announcement was to be accepted as conveying a positive certainty, considering the suddenness and violence of the recent political revolutions of the English, a nation considered on the Continent to be the most

[1] In 1711, on the death of his elder brother, the Emperor Joseph I. Charles VI died 1740.

[2] By the Act of Settlement, 1701.

fickle and unruly of peoples. Still, a strong presumption existed that not only England and Ireland, but Scotland also would in the future acknowledge the sway of George Augustus, and Caroline longed for power and scope. There was even in the minds of some English statesmen an idea that the old Electress Sophia and her son, the thoroughly German Elector, George Louis, might waive their own rights in favour of the young prince; and though this proved to be by no means to the taste of Electress or Elector, there was yet another plan, unhappily more consonant with the welfare of England than with the selfish schemes of her politicians, for bringing the Prince to reside in his future kingdom that he might become English while he was yet young. George's future crown was evidently less shadowy than that of the Archduke Charles, whose eventual coronation as Emperor was as yet undreamed of, while the position of Queen was incomparably pleasanter in England than in Spain, so that it is erroneous to describe George Augustus at this epoch as nothing but "a staring princeling." In addition to his worldly merits he had, moreover, one perhaps still more unusual of being actually in love with his proposed bride, and in the home to which he would bring her she would find a warm welcome from his grandmother, who had so ardently desired the match.

An interval had to elapse between the Princess of Ansbach's amazing rejection of an archducal suitor and her acceptance of an electoral one, partly on account of the respectful propriety which always characterized the Hanoverian attitude towards the court of Vienna, but partly, also, on account of the domestic sorrow which just then overwhelmed the ruling families of Berlin and Hanover. The Electress Sophia was seriously ill, her daughter, the Electress of Brandenburg, came to visit her, but was herself seized with violent illness, and died almost suddenly. Caroline was away from Berlin at the

time at Ansbach, where she, too, was seriously ill during this sad crisis.

There was, however, little doubt in the minds of those concerned what the result of the Hanoverian overtures would be, in spite of delay. Prince George had hinted his wishes with sufficient clearness to some of his family, to his grandmother, the Electress, and his grandparents at Celle, with whom he was a great favourite. He had told his father that he would never make a political marriage but intended to choose for himself, and in this one instance the father exerted no constraint, but left his son to do as he chose. He liked to hear talk of a marriage between himself and Caroline. "I am glad you wish it for me," he said.

Accordingly in the middle of June, 1705, Hanover society was suddenly agog with the news that "our Court Prince" had gone secretly out of town at midnight, attended only by one privy councillor, Baron Elst, and a single valet, in order, as every one guessed, "to get some opportunity of viewing incognito some Princess he hath a mind to."[1] Gossip wavered between a princess of Hesse, who was on her way through Celle, the Princess of Ansbach, and a princess of Saxe-Zeitz, said to be the most beautiful woman in all Germany. The King of Prussia, it was supposed, might be vexed if either of the two latter ladies were approached without his goodwill, for he might have views upon one of them for his own son, and the court of Hanover was rather careful not to annoy that of Prussia. At the end of a week the secret was still well kept. The Electress professed to the inquisitive English envoy that she knew no more than he did. It was imagined that "he hath got a view both of the Princesses of Hesse and of Ansbach, but where he intends to find the most charms is the question." When he came back he dutifully escorted his father to take a

[1] Poley to Stepney. Correspondence in the B.M.

cure of the Pyrmont waters, without satisfying the inquisitive, but it was surmised that "wherever curiosity may have carried him, inclination would have carried him to Ansbach." In fact, Baron Elst was despatched to carry through as quickly as possible the necessary negotiations with Caroline's brother, the Margrave, and so soon as the Elector of Hanover came home, restored to health, he made the necessary public announcement of the betrothal, old Duke George William coming over from Celle to evince his approval. The secrecy of the Prince's journey had probably been arranged to avoid any possibility of offending the courts of Vienna and Berlin; nor did the Elector intend to allow his son to indulge in any sort of ostentation on his wedding, whether out of propriety towards the imperial family, or as a sort of snub to his son, was not clear. George and Caroline were probably acquainted with each other before this; it was no case of an unknown visitor surreptitiously surveying an unknown princess.

Prince George had next to pay a public visit to Ansbach and his bride's family, and then she was to journey "privately" to Hanover and be married as quietly as possible. Great was the satisfaction in that capital, where her beauty and merit were not unknown, and it was hoped "that the Electress having so much affection for her would help to assuage her grief for her lost daughter."

The Margrave conducted his sister to Hanover by a remarkably slow journey of ten days, and the marriage ceremony was rendered even more quiet and private than had been intended by the sudden illness and death of the old Duke of Celle, who had helped to bring it about. The court mourned for him as for a father, and though the formal mourning was suspended for a few days to admit of the wedding being celebrated, as arranged, a feeling of sadness could not but prevail,

and the old Electress, in particular, was deeply distressed.

The Electoral Prince went to meet his bride at the frontier, where she was due the very day after his grandfather's death, while the Elector, without losing a moment, hurried to take formal possession of Celle and of his father-in-law's will, which, said a rumour which bears a strong appearance of truth, he suppressed because the old Duke had disposed of his personal property in favour of his grandson. But the young prince had no means of asserting his rights, and was obliged to put up with the injustice.

Caroline entered Hanover on the 2nd of September, and the marriage was solemnized that evening. Then, for three evenings, a ball and comedies provided a semblance of festivity, "and everybody appeared as fine as they could, and the English made no small part of the show, for the Marquis of Hertford, Mr. Newport, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Austin, Mr. Tufnell, and some others had made themselves as fine as the occasion required":[1] and the Electress gave an extra ball as a compliment to them. So it happened that Caroline saw some of her future subjects in a peculiarly gracious light, giving a brightness to her rather overshadowed nuptials, and for the Onslows in particular she always retained a very friendly feeling.

Even if the marriage may have seemed a disappointing one, compared with that which Caroline had voluntarily relinquished, and although her eyes were certainly fixed on England, there was one merit in her husband almost unique in court annals of that day. He had chosen her from pure inclination, and his admiration and confidence only increased with time. In those days, when a political marriage did not by any means ensure even the necessities and decencies of an ordinary private

[1] Poley.

life, when a queen's life might be a series of indignities, or perhaps of brutalities, Caroline had much ground for rejoicing at a fate which gave her a devoted husband and an affectionate grandmother, even though she had to reckon with a *dour* father-in-law.

Although the court of Hanover, at the time when Caroline became its Electoral Princess, was no longer displaying the lavish magnificence of the days of Ernest Augustus, the taciturn Elector George Louis was nevertheless a person of some importance politically, and made a considerable figure upon state occasions. The English ambassador who came to bring the Electress the news of the Act of Settlement was entertained with all his suite in great grandeur: they were not suffered to pay for anything, but even found themselves waited upon in the morning by the Elector's personal servants bearing silver tea and coffee pots to their bedsides. English visitors of any standing who came to pay their court to the newly recognized heir of the crown were received and entertained like invited guests, and a most adulatory description of the court was sent to England by one of them, John Toland, the deist controversialist, who came as a sort of unofficial emissary two years before Caroline's marriage. From him we understand that the gardens of Herrenhausen, "delicate indeed and decked with a perpetual verdure," with their "waterworks great and noble," and the opera house of which the late Elector had been so proud, were still visited by travellers as remarkable sights, and that the last named "Rarity" held its place as "the best painted and best contrived in all Europe." George Louis had, too, the musical taste of his family, and was the earliest patron of Händel.

The court of Hanover was so polite as to be "*even* in Germany accounted the best both for Civility and Decorum," nor had Mr. Toland ever known a greater

sobriety to prevail ("though nobody is abridged of his pleasure in this respect"), "nor a more exact government to be kept in any private family"; bills and wages were, he discovered, paid every Saturday, and what was still more laudable and remarkable (and indeed a pattern and rebuke to the dilatory English government) even envoys, officers, and court officials received their salaries regularly. As for the ladies of the court, the visitor found them perfectly well-bred, and was judicious enough to report that Madame de Kilmansegge "might pass for a woman of sense and of beauty, and the young Countess of Platen for a beauty, in any court whatsoever," while Mademoiselle de Schulenburg he found to be "a lady of extraordinary merit."[1] It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that the young Electoral Prince was "giving the greatest hopes of himself that we or any People on earth cou'd desire." He possessed "a very winning countenance," was "middle-sized like his Father, well made and of manly Aspect and Deportment, he speaks very gracefully and with the greatest Easiness imaginable, nor does his great vivacity let him be ignorant of anything." In truth, George Augustus was something of a chatterbox and restlessly inquisitive. And although he evinced as great a fondness for troops and warfare as his father, he was in other respects extremely like his mother, the unhappy Sophia Dorothea, which probably accounts for the inveterate dislike, finally growing to positive hatred, which George I felt towards his son and heir. In childhood the boy's rather feminine build, his small and active figure, delicate features, fair complexion, and light-brown hair, enabled people to call him pretty. In manhood his appearance often struck them as insignificant, and his quick, springy step as "strutting." From his mother, too, he must have inherited his lively con-

[1] The two latter were the Elector's mistresses, the first-named his half-sister and favourite.

versation and keenness of interest, and the warm feelings which he often expressed impulsively, as well as an inability to control blushes and tears, all of which were so many unpardonable crimes in the eyes of the sardonic father.

Whether the Elector George Louis at any moment had shared his mother's satisfaction on seeing the impulsive, self-satisfied Electoral Prince married to a woman of so judicious and strong a character as Caroline of Ansbach there is nothing to show; probably not, since she was his son's personal choice. At all events, his dislike of his son soon included the Princess also, and on the occasion of the birth of their first child, Prince Frederick, the Elector seized the occasion, as will be seen, to distress and insult them, and also the old Electress, by his strange conduct.

It was only at intervals that Caroline could enjoy the confidence and affection which the Electress Sophia bestowed on her, for they were by no means always together, although the young couple had no separate establishment, but lived under the same roof as the Elector and his mother when the court was all gathered at Hanover. The Elector, like his father before him, moved about a good deal—to the war, to his hunting-boxes, and to the baths at Pyrmont, and Sophia and Caroline were frequently separated. The old Electress spent as much as possible of her time at Herrenhausen, whither the English envoys often followed her, for she could no longer be said to "count for nothing in affairs" since she had become "Princeps haereditaria Magnae Britanniae." Unhappily her son's jealousy, which could not now preclude her from taking her proper place in public life, showed itself by ignoring her wishes in matters of the family, and it seems as if he took pains to keep her away from the young Electoral Princess.

From the moment of her marriage Caroline found her-

self compelled to take count both of this jealousy, which threatened family peace, and of the English political intrigues which had begun to be woven about the Elector and his mother so soon as their succession to the English crown had become assured.[1] Incessant manoeuvres were set on foot by that party in London which was "in opposition"—in 1706 the Tory party. The Duke of Ormond and the Tories were for the most part really Jacobites, and cherished a hope of exciting in Queen Anne such an aversion to the Hanoverian House as might impel her to make an attempt to set aside the Act of Settlement and open the way to the restoration of her brother, called by the Whigs "The Pretender," but by most other people, including his electoral kinsfolk in Hanover, "The Prince of Wales." The Tories and Jacobites had their agents at the Elector's court, not only English gentlemen who came ostensibly to pay their respects, but a useful lady resident who was to some degree in the good graces of the Electress, one Lady Bellamont, or Mrs. Bard, as the Whigs preferred to name her. She claimed to be the widow of Prince Rupert, the famous brother of the Electress, who on that account protected her and allowed her the *entrée* of the court. The English envoy was not entitled to resent her conduct openly, though she tried to bribe every member of his household, from the chaplain to the scullery girls, to get them to betray news to her.

Not only were these spies continually on the watch for a false step on the part of the new heirs of the throne, but some of the English Whig party were desirous of obtaining the ear of the Elector or his mother by channels more secret than through the accredited English envoy.

[1] For what follows cf. despatches of General Howe in the Public Record Office (State Papers, Germany, States, 162, 163, 164b). His wife was daughter of Prince Rupert, hence a natural antagonism to Lady Bellamont.

Anxious to push the Whig schemes further than the responsible heads of their party and of the English government considered feasible, they tried the plan of approaching the Electress through another lady, a favourite niece, the "Raugravine" Amalia (illegitimate daughter of the Elector Palatine). She was the Electress's principal lady of the bedchamber, and was supposed to have influence. Amalia, knowing very little of England ("or, indeed, of anything else," adds the resentful envoy), was flattered to find her friendship courted by the unofficial Whig emissary, who was, in 1706, young Mr. Craggs, a politician known to be patronized by the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. The latter were, not unnaturally, supposed to be all-powerful in London, so the young man's credentials obtained him an easy entrance to the court of Hanover. There, also, divergent views were to be found among the ministers who helped to guide the Elector's policy, old Chancellor Platen giving credit to the unofficial, the more acute Bernstorff to the official, English agent. And the latter was satisfied that his ally was the strongest man at the court, all the others being "such leather-headed things that the stupidity of them is not to be conceived."

These personal intrigues ran, of course, quite apart from the great business of the war between the Anglo-German Allies and the King of France, wherein the Elector of Hanover enjoyed a great consideration, largely on account of his influence upon Sweden and Prussia, whose concerns were for ever threatening to interfere with those of the Grand Alliance.[1]

At the time of Caroline's entry into the electoral court at Hanover all things English were enjoying a great deal

[1] There was a war involving Sweden, Russia, Poland and Denmark; Prussia and Hanover were both interested; it was Marlborough's aim to prevent this war from merging into the Spanish Succession War, and partly by the aid of Hanover he succeeded.

of attention there, and she, nothing loth, made herself very gracious to English travellers, some of whom found words "wanting to express her winning, easy, affable behaviour and sweet good temper to all our countrymen."[1] Very wisely she at once took the trouble to learn the English language, and got her husband to study it with her, he "getting on pretty well," and she "showing that she had a decided turn for that language."[2]

Almost her first experience was assisting in the reception of the English envoy, General Howe, who came in 1705. Caroline and her husband had to second the Electress Sophia and the Elector in expressing their gratitude and affection towards Queen Anne, who now at length, under pressure from her Whig ministers, was making more cordial advances to her cousins and successors than had been the case at first. At the end of the year appeared the great Duke of Marlborough himself, the soul of the Grand Alliance, and apparently the dictator of English politics, as of English wars. He visited Hanover in the course of one of his lightning-speed political journeys, and interested himself in the negotiations for the marriage of Caroline's two cousins, her sister-in-law, Sophia Dorothea the younger, and the Crown Prince of Prussia (afterwards King Frederick William I).

In the meantime Mr. Craggs had been making friends with the Princess Caroline. He found that she had a fancy to have some *tea*, and presented her with all that he had with him—for English travellers carried their tea abroad with them already. She told him that she longed to read a certain English novel, which presumably must have been in fashion in these early days of fiction, called "St. Evremond," and the obliging young man wrote urgently to his father[3] to procure the book at once and

[1] John Ker, 1714. [2] Leibniz.

[3] Old Craggs had been a sort of steward to the Duke of Norfolk,

send it out to him. Unfortunately he wrote a great deal more in his letter home than these simple details, as, for example, that the Electress had told him that she "loved the envoy and his wife very well, but he is a fool and she is very ill-natured,"—words which he afterwards said he had invented himself; and as the suspicious English ambassador chose to intercept this letter it came out that the youthful intriguer, the friend of the Raugravine and Lady Bellamont, the courtier of the Electoral Princess, was endeavouring to discredit the authorized ambassador, and to bring Elector and Electress to give favourable consideration to a proposition which was about to be laid before the English parliament, namely, that the Electress and her grandson the Prince (together with his wife, of course) should be invited to visit England and take up their residence there. This suggestion was not mooted by the heads of the Whig ministry in London. They knew but too well the jealousy with which Queen Anne viewed her German heirs. But it was the fancy of some of the less responsible members of the party that such a proceeding, could it be carried out, would seal the certainty of the Hanoverian succession and therewith of their own perpetual hold on political power. That those English in Hanover who were secretly Jacobites adopted the scheme and helped to urge it on Sophia's attention ought to have shown its authors its futility. If the Electress lent a favourable hearing to the plan nothing would more certainly rouse Queen Anne's resentment, probably even to the extent of thrusting her into the arms of the Tories.

The Electress, however, was sagacious enough to know that the interest of her family lay in agreement with the English ministers and their accredited agent, and in try-

and then to the Duchess of Marlborough. Both he and his son held ministerial office later, and were badly involved in the South Sea scandals.

ing to keep in check Anne's sensitive jealousy by evincing only alacrity to meet her personal wishes. Accordingly, Mr. Craggs was ostensibly disgraced, enough, that is, to satisfy General Howe, but not enough to offend him and his father's influential connections. The Electress declared herself indignant; the Elector gave official orders not to admit him to dine at court any more, although he did so "by accident." Baron Bernstorff declined to visit him, but Count Platen asked him to dinner. So elaborate were the precautions which had to be taken to do nothing which any political faction across the sea might take ill.

It was much easier to celebrate her Britannic Majesty's birthday in a manner so zealous as to be described in despatches. That auspicious day happened in 1705 to fall upon Ash Wednesday, so General Howe arranged to keep it next day by a ball of ten or twelve couples: a small affair, as it was Lent and the court were still in mourning for the Duke of Celle. However, no sooner was his party announced than the Electoral Prince and Princess sent word that they should like to come and join in the dancing, and would bring with them the Margrave of Ansbach, who was visiting his sister, as well as the Elector's brothers. When they arrived they were accompanied by the Electress herself, she and all of them out of mourning for the occasion and "as finely dresst as was possible to be." Caroline and George and all the Princes danced gaily till ten o'clock, then they supped, and the Electress herself proposed the toast of the Queen of England's health. Then they went on dancing again until two in the morning, the Electress watching the whole time: "and if the young Princes had had their way they would have stayed till this time," wrote the gratified General next day. Balls were perhaps not so plentiful in Hanover under the *régime* of the Elector George Louis.

Not very long after this impromptu demonstration General Howe received word that Her Majesty Queen Anne designed to bestow a signal compliment upon the Electoral Prince by conferring upon him the Garter which his grandfather of Celle had held, perhaps a sort of reward for the deferential attitude adopted of late. A special ambassador of higher rank than Howe came to bring the insignia, together with letters of naturalization in England for the Electress and her family. The ambassador was the Earl of Halifax, attended by Dorset and by Mr. Addison, who thus made a sort of acquaintance with Caroline, not forgotten by him when she became Princess of Wales and he dedicated his "Cato" to her in graceful terms. The embassy remained three weeks (May, 1706), and all manner of ceremony and feasting took place, the Elector having ordered public rejoicings for the victory of Ramillies. It was a gay summer in Hanover, for soon the betrothal of Princess Sophia Dorothea to the Crown Prince of Prussia was announced and the King of Prussia paid a visit of state. Caroline's first year in her husband's home must have been bright with activity and every appearance of prosperity. It was not until the winter of 1706 that her sky began to be overcast by the Elector's suspicious treatment of his son.

The Elector George seems to have been as ill pleased by the prominence given to the Prince by Lord Halifax's mission as was the old Electress by the expense to which it had put her. And no doubt the expressed wish of the ultra-Whigs to get young George to England intensified his jealousy. The Electress had, to be sure, been as positive as her son in her assurances to the envoy that nothing should induce her to entertain any kind of proposition that did not emanate from the Queen herself, while the Electoral Prince and Princess had most discreetly effaced themselves altogether, but when George had once arrived at any conclusion neither persuasion

nor proof ever induced him to alter it by a jot. He was now determined never to permit his son to be treated as a person of any consequence.

When, therefore, Queen Anne followed her bestowal of the Garter upon the young prince by creating him an English peer as Duke of Cambridge—one of the titles never held but by royalty, the Elector intimated to Howe that there must not be a special embassy again. In fact, from the expense and trouble of entertaining such embassies he was heartily averse. The Prince and his wife expressed to the envoy their extreme pleasure at this mark of Her Majesty's gracious favour, and contrived to make him feel delicately complimented (this must have been Caroline's doing, her husband was not deft in compliment) by their intimation that they, and the whole court, would much prefer to have the patent of the peerage presented by him rather than by a strange nobleman.

It took a long while to make out this patent, the official acknowledgement of George Augustus's new dignity, but when at length it arrived it was accompanied by a letter written to him by Anne's own hand. Before they reached Hanover, however, the Elector's ill-will to his son and daughter-in-law had culminated in a deliberate insult in which he contrived to involve the Electress Sophia as well as Caroline. That his conduct would certainly be taken as an insult to the English envoy, too, may even have increased the Elector's satisfaction, his mother and his children would feel much more concern thereat than himself.

Caroline was expecting, in January, 1707, the birth of her first child, and the court had become extremely anxious about her before the baby, who was to be known as Prince Frederick, made his appearance on the 1st of February. To the amazement of all, the Princess's apartment had been closed by the Elector's order to all save the nurse and surgeon; not even the Electress was per-

mitted to be with her beloved granddaughter, though she came anxiously to the door to seek admittance. No witnesses were allowed to be present, all was shrouded in absolute secrecy, nor had the Electress herself any news until the entire court was formally told of the birth of a prince, and that he was to be named Frederick Louis. But even then no official notification of the birth of an heir, such as was required by etiquette, was made to the English envoy. The King of Prussia, with whom Caroline was a favourite, sent his own chamberlain to convey congratulations and bid him *demand* to see the child, but the demand was not granted, and nobody saw either babe or mother but the serving-women.

General Howe appears to have felt that an insult was intended, but as the insult seemed to be aimed principally at the old Electress he expressed no sentiments aloud, but in his letters blamed the Elector and the Prince impartially; the one was likely to be as bad as the other, he said, wherein he certainly did poor Prince George wrong. He was deeply concerned, and privately and earnestly assured the envoy that this secrecy and apparent disrespect to Queen Anne were by no means his doing.

At length the Elector "sent to tell" his mother that her great-grandson was about to be christened that evening. She, himself, and the King of Prussia were to be sponsors. She might go to the theatre as usual, and he would let her know when all was ready; then, but not till then, she might come, but she must bring nobody with her. On the receipt of this cavalier message the Electress merely reminded her son that his cousin, the Princess Louise of the Palatinate, was her visitor and could not be excluded without rudeness. The Elector at once returned that he refused permission, but the Electress took her niece with her nevertheless. She had but just gone into the playhouse when, in the middle of

the first act, came the messenger to summon her to Caroline's bedchamber, where the ceremony was performed. This momentary glimpse of Caroline, who was as dear to her as a daughter, and of the baby prince, was all the Electress was permitted to have, except for one brief interview two days later, after which the Elector carried off his mother and the entire court to Brunswick Fair, leaving Caroline in absolute seclusion for some three weeks. At the end of this time it was announced that visitors might pay their respects to the Electoral Princess, and her family and the English envoy were at last allowed to see the little heir of Hanover and Great Britain "along with all the world," as the General indignantly reported. No wonder he considered that the Elector was acting "in an unaccountable manner."

It was in the midst of these peculiar circumstances that Queen Anne's autograph letter to the Prince arrived, together with the patent of his English dukedom. The envoy had supposed it would be a simple matter to present these royal compliments, and expected some courteous gratitude. Great was his surprise to find himself studiously avoided for several days by all the Hanoverian ministers and officials, so that he could not get his message properly conveyed to the Elector, who sent word that he would gladly hear his communication, but it must be quite in private. Howe hinted that the Queen's letter must be presented with due dignity. "Whatever comes from the Queen is always very agreeable to me," replied the Elector coldly, but he would not let Howe see the Prince. Howe tried to get at him through a gentleman-in-waiting; the gentleman quite misunderstood the message, and several days thus passed in ridiculous delays before the English envoy was able to see Prince George at all, and when he did it was to learn from his own lips that, though it gave him the most genuine regret, he was able to do nothing of himself, but was

obliged to await his father's orders before he dared receive the gifts with which the General was charged. It was clear enough—or it would have been to any one but the dull and stiff Englishman—that George was much distressed that such discourtesy should be shown to Queen Anne's agent, and he was exceedingly anxious that it should be explained to her that it was absolutely contrary to his own wishes; but Howe only put his messages on record with a sneer, and it is probable that Anne always connected this petty insult—for such indeed it was—with the Electoral Prince, for this was the last occasion on which she offered to show him any friendliness. The Elector had certainly succeeded in placing his son at a disadvantage.

The incident began to look awkward; the Hanoverian ministers tried to induce the Elector to permit his son to give a proper audience to Howe, but in vain; it was a great mistake, the Elector said, that the Prince had ever been allowed to receive the Garter in state, "it had been done wrong and should be so no more." Nearly two months elapsed before the Prince was allowed to receive General Howe privately and have the Queen's letter and his patent as Duke of Cambridge delivered "in a very negligent manner, as if 'twere a letter or message from any particular body." The impression produced in England could not but be unfortunate, especially as the envoy was too dense to believe the anxious assurances made to him by the ministers that the whole affair was due to the Elector's jealousy of his son. He repeated that he could not help thinking it likely that the Prince might wish to insult the Queen himself. It was, on the contrary, more likely that the unfeigned delight with which the young prince and his wife had greeted the first announcement of the honour had inspired the Elector to humiliate his son in this manner, and, incidentally, to show his own lack of eagerness about things English. His agent in

England had just died, and he allowed his indifference to be intimated openly, and very foolishly, thought his ministers, who were themselves far from indifferent to the English prize, by delaying for some time to send over a new envoy.

The Elector, moreover, was becoming noticeably backward in a sphere of far more importance to England than the exchange of courtesies—the War. He hoped to be appointed chief commander of the Imperial army on the Rhine. Marlborough was in command of the Anglo-Dutch troops, Prince Eugene of another German army. Yet his delay in starting for the summer campaign was surprising. He was constantly ordering his baggage to start, and then countermanding his order while he lingered at Herrenhausen, nor would he permit the Prince to set forth until after his own departure. George Augustus was keen to see active service, and chafed at his enforced inactivity, but "the Elector means to do nothing," reported the English agent. And, in fact, when he reached his army, the season was too late to begin decisive manœuvres. Those were the days when an army in the field was sometimes kept doing nothing for weeks because its general had gout too badly to move; "when he is sufficiently recovered I suppose we shall have a battle," they wrote tranquilly.

The same dilatoriness was displayed by the Elector of Hanover in the campaigns of the next two years, although he was in 1708 named Commander-in-Chief of the Rhine army. He had conceived so deep a jealousy of Prince Eugene, Marlborough's brilliant colleague in arms and diplomacy, that Eugene had to summon Marlborough himself to persuade the Elector to agree to their military plans. The Duke hurried from the Hague to Hanover in five days. In two days more he had won over the Elector, partly by giving up to him a body of 2,000 cavalry badly needed by Eugene, partly by concealing

from him the principal strategical movement on which they were determined. Then he flew back to the Hague again.[1]

It was not till July that the Electoral Prince could extract his father's grudging consent to go to the war again. His view of warfare the year before had "pleased him very much," though no active fighting had occurred; now he joined the army of Marlborough, somewhat to the surprise of the Duke, who wrote—"It would have been more natural for him to have served with his father, but I suppose they have a mind he should make acquaintance with the English officers." In consequence Prince George was able to take part, and a gallant part, in the great battle of Oudenarde (11th July, 1708), charging in the first onset of the Anglo-Hanoverian cavalry. He came off unhurt, although his horse was shot under him, and "the children of France and the Pretender fled before him," as Addison afterwards reminded people.[2] The credit he won was a little set-off to the ill-repute his father was incurring as commander on the Rhine, where he refused to make any decisive movement and evinced nothing but discontent and jealousy of Prince Eugene.

The next year—the last year of active fighting in the Netherlands and Germany—it was the same, and to make sure that the Prince should reap no more laurels he was kept at home. Poor George, burning to be on campaign, was told in April that he might go. He began rapid preparations, and then was bidden to desist, as his father was uncertain whether he could go after all. Uncertain the Elector remained, in spite of all the son could say, until his own tardy start in August, and then he made up his mind that the Prince must stay at home, and so he missed Malplaquet.

Caroline's life in Hanover seems to have been un-

[1] *Cf.* Marlborough's letters in Stanhope's "Reign of Queen Anne."
[2] In the "Freeholder" for December, 1715.

eventful, but uncomfortable so far. When she was able to be with the Electress at Herrenhausen, as was generally the case during the Elector's absences, she may have enjoyed some pleasure in that intellectual little court, where *savants* and politicians paid court to her as second only to the Electress. Save for the jealous Elector the family were affectionate and united. The King of Prussia allowed his daughter-in-law, the young Crown Princess Sophia Dorothea, to visit her grandmother, and on his own visits distinguished Caroline by his friendliness. On one occasion he presented her with a coffee service of solid gold plate as a New Year's gift.[1] No one, however, could save her from having to face, in the summer of 1707, the terror of smallpox. That horrible disease was then taken almost as a matter of course, the principal fear of every woman being lest her appearance should be ruined by it before she was married. It took a heavy toll of life, royal and common, and Caroline's experiences now helped to make her an early and ardent supporter of the practice of inoculation so soon as it was introduced. She was taken ill during her husband's absence, and it was at first thought that she would just escape having the disease; but later, after her husband's return, we are told that her illness was actually smallpox, and that the Prince, in his anxiety, would not leave her room.

In the summer of 1709 she was again expecting her confinement, and came back to Hanover from Herrenhausen, whither one of the Raugravines went to take her place as companion to the old Electress. Soon both the Electress and the Crown Princess of Prussia came to be near her; but, unfortunately, before the expected event happened the Elector came home, in October, from his brief and idle campaign of two months, and instantly ordered his mother and daughter to come with him to

[1] *Cf.* Despatches of Alais. P.R.O., *loc. cit.*, 163.

Die Göhrde, the most inaccessible of his hunting palaces, and thus leave Caroline without their tender care. Only her husband managed to stay with her, professing that he only put off his journey to Die Göhrde for a week.

On November 2nd a little girl was born, and the Prince took good care that all proper notifications were this time made to the representative of England. He wrote to beg of Queen Anne the favour of bestowing her name upon the baby, and permitting herself to be named as its godmother. Apparently princesses were of slight consequence, for the Elector does not seem to have exerted his exclusive authority on this occasion, nor on the birth of the two little girls who came next, the princesses Amalie (or Emily) born in 1711, and Caroline, born in 1713, though he was to do so when the next son came.

The Electoral Prince and Princess seem to have taken little prominent part in politics, and to have kept somewhat aloof from the court. While the Elector, accompanied as a rule by his mother and his brother Prince Ernest, would visit Wolfenbüttel, Celle, or Pyrmont, or go on hunting expeditions to his different woodland residences, George and Caroline remained soberly at Hanover with their little children. The English envoy could report (in May, 1712) that "the Court all is gone to Herrenhausen for the whole summer, *only* the Prince electoral and his wife the princess remain here."[1]

[1] *Cf.* despatches from English agents at Hanover. B.M. Add. MS. 7075.

CHAPTER II

ENGLAND

THE Hanoverian electoral family found a difficult problem in ordering their conduct towards Queen Anne and the English politicians, especially after the Elector's behaviour in the matter of his son's English dukedom had given rise to suspicions of a want of cordiality. They must neither seem to be eager about the succession, as if watching for the Queen's death, nor appear to undervalue the splendid prospect. It was still thought to be possible that, after all, the Stewart prince, called in France "James III," might declare himself a Protestant, in which case the Hanoverians would no doubt have been set aside; and although they would certainly have acquiesced quietly therein, for they always entertained a certain sentiment of cousinly interest in the exiled royal family, yet they would not wish, in that case, to have shown themselves eager for the British throne.

The greatest puzzle was, upon whose advice to rely. The Whig and Tory parties were easily to be distinguished, but those parties were by no means firmly consolidated; there was a galaxy of ambitious lords of whom each professed a perfect zeal in the cause of the Electress Sophia, and claimed to exercise a decisive influence over his friends or party, yet each was only anxious to secure his own position, and perpetually thwarted the intrigues of the others. They gave conflicting advice, and the

Electress and her grandchildren were still in doubt whether Prince George's dukedom of Cambridge did not, after all, make it desirable for him to visit his future kingdom and show himself in his place in the House of Lords.

A political revolution took place in England in 1710. The Earl of Halifax, who had brought over the Prince's Garter, was now involved in the disgrace of the Whig party. These were the men who had decided against the Prince's visit to England, but they were now in great alarm lest the Tory reaction, which had swept the country, should tempt Queen Anne to yield to her growing sympathy for her exiled brother, and lead to a Stewart restoration which would drive the Whigs for ever from political power. Perhaps they had made a mistake in not introducing the Hanoverian prince to the nation. Accordingly some of the schemers began to revive the old plan for bringing him over; and the arch-schemer, Harley, now Earl of Oxford and chief of the Tory ministry, was himself cognisant of it, and refrained from discouragement; but whether because he meant to play on the Queen's jealousy, stronger than ever now that she was failing in health and extremely touchy in temper, or because he saw in the proposition a means of gaining favour at Hanover, should he in the end dissociate himself from the Jacobite policy of St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, need not be debated here. The new envoy, sent from Hanover to England in 1713, young Baron Schutz, was not skilful enough to match the English politicians. He had been ordered to find out the opinion of the most honest and patriotic of the Whig leaders, Halifax and Somers; but, unfortunately, he let himself be enticed by Harley and others into making a definite demand for the Prince's writ of attendance as Duke of Cambridge, to enable him to take his seat in the House of Lords. Hereupon Harley bade him go to the Lord Chancellor.

Chancellor Harcourt professed to be much surprised and flustered, and that he could not give a formal reply, but added that the writ was "of course" lying sealed at the Office, all ready to be called for. The deluded Schutz called for it, and thereupon the diplomatic storm burst. Queen Anne was exceedingly angry at the "insult"—it was a flagrant announcement of want of confidence; it was an attempt to force her hand; it was an attempt to snatch at her crown before she was dead: the Tories were in the highest glee, for not only was the unlucky envoy flung into the direst disgrace and forbidden to appear at court, but the Queen herself wrote angry letters to Hanover to inform the Electress that the demand was a personal insult, and that such conduct "might imperil the succession," an expression which could only be taken, and was taken, as a threat to undo the Act of Settlement and restore the Stewart line.

No doubt the power, or at least the influence, in Anne's hands was still considerable, and the intrigues of the Tories were skilful; nevertheless it is clear that the electoral family attached far more importance to Anne's angry outburst than it really merited. Her ill temper could not repeal the Act of Settlement, nor alter the fixed resolution of the citizens of London, nor create an army in the Jacobite interest. But Sophia was deeply moved. The catastrophe appeared to her most menacing, and she was both hurt and alarmed by the angry tone of the royal epistles. The agitation, she said, would certainly make her ill; she should never survive it; "but I will have that gracious letter printed," she declared,[1] "that everybody may see it is not my fault if my children lose the three crowns."[2]

Caroline and her husband were as deeply concerned

[1] Leibniz: Correspondence with the Electress Sophia.

[2] As usually taken, of England, Ireland, and Scotland; technically, Great Britain, Ireland, France.

as their grandmother. The Princess wrote to Leibniz, still the familiar correspondent of the family, that worse than losing a kingdom would be the injury inflicted on Protestantism, on European liberty, and on so many friends in England. For the moment she really supposed that the Roman Catholic Stewart, the tool of the Pope and Louis XIV, might be placed on the English throne by Anne's spite and the machinations of the Tories.

The Electress's health was evidently affected by the shock, and she owned to being overcome; but after spending most of the day (Thursday, 7th June (N.S.), 1714) in bed she insisted that she felt better, and would get up to sup with the Elector. The next day she behaved as usual, dined in public, and would take her usual evening walk in the spacious garden—for the court was at her favourite home, Herrenhausen. The sky was overcast and threatening rain, but the sturdy old Electress refused to be carried in her chair, and paced the walks, leaning on Caroline's arm, and talking to her still of these English troubles which were so much upon her mind. Just behind them walked in attendance one of the ladies in waiting, Countess Bückeburg, to whom Sophia presently turned with her gracious smile, and, drawing her into the conversation, had begun to speak on indifferent topics, when she suddenly felt extremely tired and began to walk heavily. Caroline anxiously asked her if she did not feel ill. The Electress seemed to assent, and they turned to go into the house. At that moment a sudden shower of rain began to fall, and the other ladies were hastily running indoors, so that no assistance was immediately at hand; the Countess, however, was able to call to a servant to go at once for help, and the Electress tried to hasten into an arbour close by, but she could no longer stand upright: "I am ill, give me your hand," she said, and instantly sank back in Caroline's arms. All the Princess and Countess Bückeburg

could do was to crouch down on the floor of the arbour, and hold her in their arms, and before the hurrying attendants from the palace could reach the spot, Sophia had expired.

It was the end she would herself have chosen, wrote her old friend Leibniz, afterwards, to die thus without warning and almost without pain, "without priest and without doctor," and in the arms of her loved granddaughter Caroline. And he touchingly besought the princess in his letter to deign to accept him as a legacy from the dead Electress, "like some old piece of furniture."

The shock of this loss, together with the apparent ruin of her husband's fair prospects in England, saddened Caroline grievously. She replied to the faithful Leibniz that never any trial had touched her so keenly as this. Her husband, too, took the English crisis so much to heart that she feared for his health, almost for his life! Only from the religious and philosophical reflections in Leibniz' "Théodicée" could she draw some comfort. She had, indeed, been fixing all her hopes for the future upon the succession in England. For some time a part of her attendance had been composed of English persons. She was never without an English instructress, with whom she regularly studied English authors, and the history of the country; and one of her principal ladies was the beautiful Mrs. Howard, sister-in-law of the Earl of Suffolk, who had come to Hanover with her impecunious husband in hopes of the very thing which happened. The husband (a worthless spendthrift, despite the blood of all the Howards) was taken into the household of the Elector, the charming and lovely wife became, first, a lady-in-waiting to the Electress, afterwards an almost confidential attendant on the Princess.[1]

[1] Not that even this preferment could be obtained without conciliating the goodwill of the ministers of George Louis. The story

In the meantime the Elector George Louis, who always affected indifference to the crown of England, had been treating the political difficulty very calmly. He disavowed Baron Schutz, not very truthfully, as having acted without his instructions; but deferred writing to Queen Anne for some three weeks, when he indited an epistle in vague but submissive terms, and sent over his confidential secretary, Robethon. The false step was to appear wholly his mother's and his son's concern, not his. It was equally characteristic that he made a small saving by not paying the modest salary of his mother's best friend, Leibniz, who held the post of court librarian: and he refused to accede to the petition of his son and daughter-in-law on Leibniz' behalf, on the paltry score that that distinguished philosopher had not yet produced the succinct History of the House of Brunswick, which the Elector had ordered of him, and apparently had expected to see turned out in a few months, like an almanack. He did not, probably, intend to insult the old man; he merely saw no difference between a philosopher of European reputation and a copying clerk, and he wished to teach him his place.[1]

In two months more, before Caroline had grown accustomed to the blank at Herrenhausen, she learned that their agitation had been needless; and that Anne's wrath and the Tory manœuvres had alike been futile. The English ministry had but just dispatched an ambassador

was famous how the poverty-stricken young couple felt they must entertain the ministers by a feast, and how Mrs. Howard actually cut off and sold her beautiful hair to raise the means of doing so. The loss, of course, would not be observable in those days of wigs.

[1] Leibniz' treatise on the "Annals of the House of Brunswick"—which begins in the Dark Ages—was produced just before his death in 1716, and remained unprinted for 130 years. The old *savant's* great wish was to visit London, but George I refused permission, and Bernstorff conveyed the refusal in a sarcastic recommendation to stay in his proper place in Hanover and stick to his work.

to remonstrate personally with the Elector upon the recent demand for a Writ—though the rumour in Hanover ran that he had come to ask for little Prince Fritz to educate in England—when, early in August, the late intriguer, Mr. James Craggs, arrived, sent privately by the Whigs to bring the tidings that the Queen was certainly on her death-bed. Hard on his heels came a special messenger with the news that on the 1st of August, 1714,[1] Anne had expired.

It is matter of history how Anne's death occurred too suddenly for the success of Lord Bolingbroke's complicated schemes to restore the Stewarts, and how easily he was foiled by the Whig Dukes of Argyll and Shrewsbury. He and his associates, at all events, played the Whigs a good turn by convincing the new sovereign that to the Whig party alone he owed his accession, and in the Whig party alone he would find support.

Already the nominations of George I for a provisional government of England, until his own arrival could take place, were in the hands of the Whig chiefs in London, and their arrangements were acquiesced in with a perfect tranquillity.

The Elector did not hurry on his journey, but neither did he unduly delay, and he was ready to start for his new kingdom in a month.

Very touching was the departure of the electoral family from Hanover. Crowds lined the streets, in great distress, some even weeping at the loss of their Elector, who was not unpopular, and at the consequent loss of prestige, brilliance, and trade. The Elector himself, who expected to be uncomfortable in England, was not unaffected, and, contrary to his wont, showed something of his feelings. He had told the citizens that he would grant them a boon on this great occasion, and they had begged for the discharge of the insolvent debtors from prison, and—

[1] In England the old style was still officially used.

a much greater concession—for the abolition of tolls upon food; both their requests were granted, so that gratitude was mingled with grief. Moreover, to lessen as far as possible the blow dealt to local society and fashion by his departure, the King-Elector left instructions for the maintenance of some court ceremonial, although without a living centre. The usual court assemblies were to be held in the palace, and upon the electoral chair was to be placed his Highness's portrait, to which the bows and courtesies usually made to himself were to be addressed. Stables and gardens, and the whole staff of officials, were to be maintained as usual, for his Majesty had every intention of coming to visit them regularly, and would bring a replenishment of resources with him from English coffers. In the meantime, since he could not leave his only son behind him, the little grandson, Frederick, as yet the only grandson, was to remain in the old home, to be brought up among the loyal Hanoverians by tutors of the Elector's choice. This may have been a gracious and perhaps not unreasonable concession to the feelings of the Hanover people, but it was a cruel blow to the little prince's parents, from whom Fritz, as the family always called him, must be separated for years, and at the most impressionable age. It proved, in truth, to be a separation for life; for the education provided by the grandfather resulted only in developing the heartlessness and frivolity of the shallow lad, the thought of whose possible accession to the throne was, in after years, to be as a nightmare to his unfortunate mother. But that grief the parents happily could not foresee when they parted in tears from their seven-year-old son.

The King and the Prince set out for England first (31st August, O.S.), leaving Caroline to await their report. They found London perfectly quiet. The proclamation of the new sovereign had been made without the

least disturbance in the three capitals, and the attitude of the people showed that, whatever might be the views of a faction of restless nobles, or the noisy clamour of mobs, the solid portion of the nation was resolved to maintain the Hanoverian succession. "The Stock was very high and all the people in good spirit," reported the new King's ministers. The Stock of the Bank of England, henceforth a register of national apprehensions, was identified with the interests of the Hanoverian line to such a degree that during Anne's last illness a report that she was recovering actually had caused the price to fall.

The 20th of September, 1714, when King George I and the new Prince of Wales made their entry into London, was fortunately a fine day; and very splendid was the procession of the English nobles in two hundred coaches, each drawn by six horses, which escorted the new monarch from Greenwich to London Bridge. There he entered the sacred domain of the City of London, and there the Lord Mayor and the entire corporation received their sovereign, and conducted him through the City between the ranks of the "trained bands," the City's own troops, amidst a rejoicing crowd. Bells pealed and guns were fired as the King reached his palace of St. James's, between seven and eight of the evening. He must have been weary of the seven hours' journey in his coach, and probably thought that the modest proportions of St. James's and its somewhat dingy appearance compared ill with his stately palace of Herrenhausen; but with the Park, at least, he was certainly pleased, and the sight of the immense crowds actually surprised him. He said, grotesquely enough, that it made him think of the Resurrection!—"It was our political Resurrection, Sire," replied Lady Cowper, aptly. Lady Cowper, the wife of the Chancellor, could talk French.[1]

[1] Vehse, "Geschichte der Höfe des Hauses Braunschweig."

As all was so quiet and orderly it was safe for the Princess of Wales to follow as quickly as possible with her little daughters. The youngest of them, Caroline, was recovering from an illness; she was a delicate child, and her mother felt it wiser to leave her in Hanover till the spring; but she dispatched Anne and Emily, aged five and three, three days before her own departure, that they might make an easy journey to the Hague, and it was observed that they and their little party were in the charge of an English gentleman, for from the beginning Caroline resolved to make her family adopt their new nationality as completely as possible. The princesses, in fact, became practically English from their first years. The little prince left in Hanover was under his grandfather's orders, and Caroline was not able to give him an English tutor at once, not, indeed, until Leibniz wrote to tell her rather pointedly how English visitors called to pay their respects to the boy, and expressed their surprise at finding him unprovided with even one English servant.

On the 12th of October (N.S.), the Princess of Wales, as her rank now was, set out on her momentous journey, and left behind her the native country which she was never to see again, to reach what, to her, was certainly a land of promise. It took her only five days to reach the Hague, a place which was for the next fifty years to be very familiar with the sight of English royalties journeying between their continental and their island dominions. Special yachts were in waiting with their attendant men-of-war, and the Princess with her children and suite set sail as early as possible on Sunday morning, and reached Margate on Monday night (11th October, O.S.).

The next day they drove from Margate to Rochester, but before they reached this town they were met by the Prince of Wales, who had left London at seven in the

morning in order to meet his wife as quickly as possible: he had thought to have reached Margate. On Wednesday the royal party entered London, and for a second time Prince George drove through the city, this time with his charming wife at his side, while in a separate coach behind them came the two little princesses. The crowd was genuinely delighted with Caroline's graceful manner and fascinating smile, and by the pretty sight of the two "lovely and sprightly" children, who seem to have evinced a natural glee at the proceedings, and loud acclamations accompanied the cavalcade on its way. The Tower guns saluted when the Prince and Princess crossed London Bridge, its houses crowded with cheering spectators at every window, and a similar salute was heard from the guns of the park when they alighted before St. James's. At night a general rejoicing was shown by bonfires and illuminations.

There had not been a Princess of Wales in London since the Fair Maid of Kent, the wife of the Black Prince, nor had a young royal family graced the court since the days of Charles I: the sight of the children, in fact, really produced a feeling of security, as giving hope of a regular royal succession—"a sight," declared one loyal preacher, "not known for several hundred years!"—forgetting the children of James I, but otherwise accurately. A certain pleasant enthusiasm might therefore naturally be expected, and as George I brought with him no queen the position of Caroline was all the more brilliant and responsible. There was great curiosity to see her, when, on Friday the 15th of October (o.s.), having recovered from the fatigue of the journey, she came into the royal drawing-room about seven o'clock, and stayed for three hours among the company. "There was a basset table and ombre tables, but the Princess sitting down to picquet, all the company flocked about to that table, and the others not used. 'Twas a pool, the

Duchess of Marlborough, Lady Pembroke, and the Countess of Buckenburgh."[1] It must have been a curious party if only for the picture of haughty old Sarah Marlborough and the ambitious German princess taking stock of one another. The Duke of Marlborough, his reputation still dazzling the eyes of Europe, had only just returned to England, and had made a kind of state entry into London, which the royal family considered to have been uncalled for. He was, however, reckoned as a political power, and the new sovereign was careful to be very courteous.

Caroline and her husband were quite ready to show themselves, and took pains to conciliate their new subjects. They used to walk daily in St. James's Park, she, says an observer, showing that she could walk as well as ever the Electress Sophia did, and crowds of people came to look at them. Every night they received company in drawing-rooms which were always thronged, although a few of the peers' daughters were offended because the Princess allowed them to kiss her hand, instead of graciously preventing their homage. Caroline had found out what had been the behaviour of Anne while she was heiress of the throne, and modelled her etiquette thereby. Gracious she was in the extreme, but she would abate no jot of dignity, so, though "Mrs. Sidney and some others refused to do it," they very soon found themselves in an awkward minority.

With her entry into London, at the age of thirty-one, had begun a new life for Caroline in what perhaps almost seemed to her a new world. Well acquainted as she had striven to become with the language and books of the nation she must now adopt as her own, she can hardly have had much preparation for the revelation of London itself, and all its clashing characteristics. Its size, beyond anything Caroline had ever beheld, made Hanover, with

[1] Peter Wentworth.

its 1,800 houses, even Berlin with its 5,000, sink into mere villages. London, it was calculated, contained over 100,000 houses—"very thick built." The streams of Hanover and Berlin were ditches beside the magnificent sweep of Thames, unencumbered by any bridge save London Bridge, then still covered by its antique houses; and a traveller coming up the river, after passing the succession of wharves crowded with countless shipping, rounded the green bend of Lambeth fields and gardens, and might admire on the north shore many a garden and terrace sloping to the water's edge, where still stood a number of water-gates with their flights of stone steps, giving access to a frontage of stately edifices. Conspicuous among these last was old Somerset House, with its gardens and walks; though perhaps a somewhat dilapidated looking palace, it was the dower house of the queens of England, and was very shortly to be settled upon Caroline herself: a gift which looked rather more magnificent than it would prove to be, but which enabled her occasionally to procure a few apartments or a small post for some of her *protégées*.

The river entrance to the royal residence was by the water-gate of Whitehall, whence the royal park and gardens, in a somewhat bare and neglected condition, stretched all the way to St. James's. Whitehall palace had not been rebuilt after the destructive fire in William's reign, and such buildings as were then in use were assigned as offices or lodgings for persons about the court. The palace of St. James's itself was rather awkwardly placed at the corner of St. James's Park. The approach through this was fine, indeed, but the narrow street of Pall Mall at the back of the palace permitted private houses to come almost up to the walls of the royal dwelling on that side.

London, though William III used to consider it unbearably damp and smoky, was clean as to atmosphere

and river in those days compared with our own. It was still possible to enjoy a journey in one of the innumerable passenger boats, and royalty still employed State barges, and more watermen than stablemen. So thick indeed was the traffic that boats were often overloaded, and accidents were frequent, especially in the windy Chelsea reach.

From the top of any high building, such as the tower of Somerset House, or, still better, the dome of St. Paul's, it was possible, then, to obtain a view of London as a whole, set in its green agricultural surroundings, and Caroline, in later life, had a mound made in Kensington Gardens expressly for the sake of the extensive view. Although houses and shops stretched, by this time, considerably beyond the City proper, the extending roads were still sprinkled with trees and hedges,[1] the winding Holborn road, for example, showing farmsteads and clumps of trees soon after passing Gray's Inn. St. Giles's church still stood amid the remnants of its copse, while sufficiently apart from the road rose the fine new mansions, or palaces, of the Duke of Bedford and the Duke of Montagu (now merged in the British Museum), surrounded by gardens, and backed by green meadows. The suburbs, such as Chelsea, were separated from the town by open fields, and a considerable stretch of these lay south of Holborn, crossed by innumerable paths leading to Covent Garden and the Strand. Here Charing Cross marked the end of the region of thickly built houses. Homes of quiet people dotted the wide track of the old Hay Market, which debouched into "the way from Reading," an almost country road, which ran by the Piccadilly fields. The fields seem to have got their name from a noted bowling-green and place of resort, "Peccadilla House," considered to be quite in the country. When, therefore, the magnificently artistic Lord Burling-

[1] *Cf.* the map in Maitland's History of London, 1739.

ton, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, selected a site in these fields for his splendid mansion, he felt quite safe, as he observed, from anybody ever building beyond him. It was in the reigns of George I and George II that houses began to rise thickly along the line of Piccadilly, and that the country roads with their scattered dwellings turned into modern streets.

For the moment all in the capital was tranquil, loyal, even enthusiastic. For the City was the stronghold of the mercantile Whig party which above all things feared the Pretender and a repudiation of the Debt. Consequently the entertainment was very splendid which the City offered to the new royal family upon Lord Mayor's Day, the marvellous festival whose fame had reached to France and Germany, where they had a suitable respect for Lord Mayor, and the "long and slender stick of silver" he habitually carried about. The King and the Prince and Princess of Wales were entertained in state, and Caroline's view of festive London, on that 29th of October, must have been impressive. She sat beside the King and the Prince to see the procession go by, in the gallery or window of a house opposite Bow Church, and then proceeded to the Guildhall to partake of a banquet. George I appeared on this occasion in an almost popular guise. He made the Lady Mayoress sit at the royal table, and kissed all the ladies who were presented to him. When the Mayor served him with the first glass of wine he requited it with the patent of a baronetcy, and before the feast was over requested the Sheriffs to expend £1,000 for him in that most popular of all charities, the release of insolvent debtors from their otherwise hopeless imprisonment. The poor Lady Mayoress was hardly equal to the great occasion: she "made a sad figure in her Black Velvet, and did make a most violent bawling to her Page, to hold up her train before the Princess, being loathe to

lose the Privilege of her Mayoralty. But the greatest jest was that the King and the Princess had both been told that my Lord Mayor had borrowed her for that day only, so that I [*i.e.*, Lady Cowper] had much ado to convince them of the contrary . . . at last they did agree that if he had borrowed it would have been another sort of one than she was."[1] Such was the idea of a good joke.

The day after the Lord Mayor's Show, October 30th, was the new Prince of Wales' birthday, and while guns were firing and all the bells of London ringing, the nobility thronged the levée, dressed in the most magnificent new clothes. In the evening the Princess gave her first court ball, and the ladies, already charmed at her first reception of them by her "affability, graciousness, and condescending behaviour," vied with each other to compliment her by the splendour of their jewels and attire. She and her husband opened the ball together, Caroline dancing "in *slippers* very well, and the Prince better than anybody." Never had the court been seen "so splendidly fine."

There were a good many more state ceremonies, of course, to be gone through, which the Prince and Princess undoubtedly enjoyed. In January 1715 (N.S.) they went in public to St. Paul's for the thanksgiving on account of His Majesty's "happy and peaceable accession," and then again they saw London illuminated and bonfires and fireworks flashing all around.

It was practically left to Caroline's efforts to make the nation feel that the new royal family was not absolutely foreign. She behaved in marked contrast to the King. George I brought with him his German mistresses and his German cabinet, and was understood to pay rather more attention to Bothmer, Bernstorff, Robethon, perhaps even to Secretary Fabrice, than to the ostensible heads of the English ministry. His very cooks and

coachmen were all brought from Hanover, and into the coffers of his German attendants and favourites, male and female, he poured a lavish stream of English money. A tale is told of one honest Hanoverian servant who asked his permission to return to Germany: "For what reason?"—"Because they steal here too badly; we were so careful in Hanover." "Bah!" cried the cynical King, "it is English money—steal like the rest!"

But the Prince and Princess of Wales, in their wing of St. James's, kept a wholly English court. Save for two discreet German ladies and a few cooks and unobtrusive personal attendants on the Prince, only English men and women appeared, and the chief of the Princess's ladies, Mrs. Howard, was allied to well-known English families. They had a separate staff of dignified officials, and peers were pleased to be named Chamberlain, Treasurer, Auditor, or Master of the Horse—posts which carried considerable salaries but were not altogether sinecures. Caroline had a retinue like a queen's. Besides her Groom of the Stole, an office of pure dignity filled by the Duchess of St. Albans, the heiress of all the Veres, she had five Ladies of Honour, or of the Bedchamber, all peeresses, without counting the worthy Countess von Bückeburg, lately attendant on the Electress Sophia. There were six young Maids of Honour and six married ladies as Bedchamber Women. The English ladies were the Duchesses of Bolton and Montagu, the former claiming Stewart descent, the latter a daughter of Marlborough, the Countesses of Dorset and Berkeley, and Lady Cowper, who had made Caroline's acquaintance in Hanover, and for four years had corresponded with her and "received many and those the kindest letters from her." Lady Cowper, like everybody else, thirsted to be employed at court, and her position as wife of the Lord Chancellor was held to place her on

an equality with duchesses and countesses. Of the bedchamber women, the most distinguished was Mrs. Howard, who had accompanied the Princess from Hanover; there were also Mrs. Polexfen, who died almost immediately, however, and was succeeded by Mrs. Tichborne, one of a numerous family much to the fore in the fashionable correspondence of the time, Mrs. Selwyn, the lively mother of the witty George, who became rather a favourite with Caroline, Mrs. Clayton, afterwards Lady Sundon, Mrs. Herbert, a particularly charming member of that well-known family, and Mrs. Pope.

If they were charmed with the graciousness of their mistress—*affability* is their favourite term—she, for her part, wrote to her old friend Leibniz that both "women and ladies served her with all the attention in the world."

The appointment of the Maids of Honour was delayed a few months, probably that the Princess might make a personal choice of those who, as her regular companions, would form so important a part of her private family, and intensely were the places coveted. "The town, or perhaps themselves," had quickly decided upon four acknowledged belles (Misses Bellenden, Hammond, Shorter, and Roe) for Maids. Cynical persons supposed that Her Highness might have a sufficient spark of jealousy in her composition to exclude such radiant beauty; but of common jealousy Caroline seldom, if ever, displayed any touch. Her suite, however, had to be carefully chosen with a view to the claims and feelings of high society.

The Duke of Marlborough was, in these early days, supposed, though erroneously, to have more credit with George I than other peers. The supposition did not last long, but long enough to send the Prince of Wales into a friendship with Marlborough's rival for power and place, the Duke of Argyll, the "uncrowned king of

Scotland," who had accepted a gold key as Groom of the Stole to the Prince. The Duke interested himself in the appointment of the Maids of Honour, and carried George to meet the Maids of Queen Anne at Lady Rochester's, where they had the honour of entertaining His Highness to supper, and found him "very sociable among them." Two of these ladies were quite young—Mistress Forester and Mistress Jane Warburton, and to the latter, a simple-minded, downright girl, the Duke had conceived a quite romantic attachment. His married life had been disastrous; the admiration openly shown by Miss Warburton had attracted his notice—her rejection of his dangerous attentions won his respect and admiration, and believing her to be a paragon of virtue, he entertained a chivalrous passion for her. To please him "Jenny" Warburton and her companion, Miss Forester, were appointed Maids to Caroline, while a very handsome gift of money was bestowed upon all the late Queen's Maids. This concession to the Duke of Argyll must, however, be balanced by listening next to the recommendation of Argyll's rival in Scotland, the Duke of Roxburgh, who was favoured to some degree by George I. The Duchess had been named Mistress of the Robes, and paid careful court to the Princess, and they both pressed the claims of the Duke's cousins, the Bellendens. "Smiling Mary, soft and fair as down," was perhaps the most lovely belle of that age of belles. She was "above all for universal admiration," says Horace Walpole, "her face and person were charming, lively she was almost to *étourderie*, and so agreeable she was that I never heard her mentioned afterwards by one of her contemporaries who did not prefer her as the most perfect creature they ever knew." [1] The other Maids of Honour were Miss Meadows, a lady somewhat older than the others, and much more prim and serious; her opposite, Sophy Howe, who was something

[1] Walpole's "Reminiscences."

of an indiscreet tomboy, and the famous Molly Lepell, almost as beautiful as Mary Bellenden herself, as witty, and, if less vivacious, so gentle and lovable, that she is scarcely ever spoken of but with some endearing epithet —"sweet Molly Lepell," "dear Lepell." She and Mary Bellenden soon became fast friends with the charming Mrs. Howard, who, also beautiful and graceful, was distinguished by her gentle manner and a perfect and modest dignity. It was little wonder that the apartment of the ladies in waiting became of an evening the most popular rendezvous of wits and courtiers, the amusement being all the keener because the dazzling ladies were not perfect—Mary Bellenden had a bad memory, Sophy Howe was indiscreetly open; Miss Meadows was apt to be censorious and too stiff about trifles for perfect politeness; Miss Lepell might be laughed at for little affectations; Mrs. Selwyn could not sing, nor Mrs. Herbert talk French, while Mrs. P(ope?) was rather untidy, and not "what the world calls clever." [1]

Caroline would scarcely have been human had she not enjoyed her splendid and apparently influential position. In everything she was made to feel herself of importance. She sat beside the throne in the House of Lords when the King opened his first parliament, and the Prince of Wales took his seat as a peer of the realm. Her husband had the handsome allowance of £100,000 assigned to him independently of the King, and the Princess enjoyed her own privy purse, so that she and the Prince for the first time in their lives possessed a revenue and a household with which their harsh father could not interfere—or so, for a time, they believed. The difficulties of their position were not at first evident, and the ease with which Caroline, at all events, conciliated popular and fashionable opinion probably gave her a mistaken sensation of security.

[1] *Cf.* "Suffolk Letters," ii, 331, etc.

It was always said of her by acute observers—even when her early loveliness had vanished with the coming of middle age, that her eyes were remarkably beautiful and extremely expressive—she could cause her countenance to express exactly what she chose, and her smile was singularly sweet. "She gave me no answer but a smile." "I was presented to kiss Her Highness' hand; she repeated my name aloud and smilingly gave me her hand to kiss." "So charming that she could make any one love her if she wished it." Stanhope the diplomatist, afterwards Earl of Harrington, was struck by the "polite easy wit, affability and graciousness" with which she talked to him of the court of Vienna, while adroitly avoiding anything like political conversation.

The Prince, too, was extremely affable; he did not as yet speak English so well as his wife, but he talked very fluently, and could understand readily; naturally, therefore, though everybody was "backward of speaking to the King, they are ready enough to speak to the Prince." He was not shy, and would talk before observers, sometimes helping himself out "with a world of action," in odd contrast to the phlegm of the King, of whom sundry dry stories are related, one of the best being the report of his reception of the insistent Mr. James Craggs, who, as having the *entrée* of the court, and being invited, a sole and singular condescension, even to the private card parties of the King and his German ladies, to which no other Englishmen were ever asked—supposed himself to be entitled to something worth having merely for the asking. He made the King a long harangue on his own services and deserts, "and at the conclusion desired to be Secretary of War; the King heard him out with patience and all the answer he had was: 'Non.'"[1] Despite the royal denial, however, Mr. Craggs was made a Secretary of State in the end, and his father, "the Duchess of Marl-

[1] Wentworth Papers.

bro's footman," was thrust into the lucrative place of Postmaster-General.

Apparently those who appreciated the King's shrewd insight into the pretensions of the greedy politicians around him were apt to become somewhat impatient of the Prince's effusiveness. Some of the correspondents of his cousin, the critical Duchess of Orleans (Jacobites, presumably), told her that he made himself ridiculous. They were in agreement with his cousin and enemy, the brutalized King of Prussia,[1] who termed him a Play-actor and a Dancing-master. "They think him a little bit cracked too," the Duchess commented, but to her this was only to be expected, his ludicrous behaviour, "like the marquises in Molière's comedies," is "inherited from the d'Olbreuse."

The Duchess, however, excepted Caroline altogether from the dislike she bore to the Prince of Wales ("the dear Princess of Wales has completely won my heart"), and she was only sorry for her, and indeed for all the family, on their hard fate in being transported to England, where the people "would hate an angel from heaven if they had chosen him for king." The Paris newspapers reported this country to be seething with discontent, and the Duchess supposed her cousins' position to be anything but secure. She was amazed that Caroline was able to venture on keeping the Countess von Bückeburg with her, and, indeed, that neither this good lady nor the German governess of the little princesses, Baroness von Gemmingen, was taken exception to is another tribute to Caroline's tact, and her wise choice of the few foreigners who were to risk in her court rousing the jealousy of the English.

The only insult offered to her of which we hear (though it probably never reached her knowledge) was an out-

[1] Frederick William I, husband of George I's daughter, son of Caroline's guardian, Frederick I, who had died in 1713.

rageously insolent one—a petition purporting to appeal to her well-known love of justice to consider that England really belonged to the Stewart prince, "the Pretender," since he was as certainly the son of James II as her own husband was of Königsmarck!"

The encomiums so enthusiastically expressed in private letters and diaries are scarcely less strong than the outspoken compliments which it was proper to make in public. Ambassadors came to pay their respects to Caroline, almost as if she had been a queen consort; and the Dutch ambassadors, the first to arrive, hailed her as the "Darling of mankind." The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (an exceedingly important body, practically representing all non-Jacobite Scotland) called her: "a *royal* Princess of Wales, adorned with all those virtues that make a true greatness and give a real lustre to a great court; a Princess that has signalized her zeal for the Protestant religion, and hath shown to the world that nothing can with her come into competition with the honour of her God and Redeemer, and the peace of her own conscience." This strain is often repeated in contemporary addresses, for people could readily feel admiration for a Princess who might have been an Empress would she have consented to change her creed, till it became almost trite to belaud her (with some hyperbole, considering dates) as having "disdained the prospect of the imperial diadem, preferring a sound faith to the pomps of the world."[1]

Tolerance was not a virtue as yet in much repute, which can hardly be wondered at in an age when a religious creed was even more of a political cry than in our own day, and the days of James II were still within living memory. So it was noted with general relief and pleasure that the Princess always accompanied her husband and the King when they went to testify at the altar

[1] Political State of Great Britain, 1715.

their conformity to the rites of the Established Church, whether in the royal chapel of St. James's or before a greater congregation at St. Paul's; while her friendship with worthy Bishop Wake, who shortly became Archbishop of Canterbury, was a matter of pleasure to the discriminating. The attitude Caroline adopted towards the English form of religion was really of considerable importance as an assurance of permanent steadfastness among the royal family in the national faith, for the Stewart queens consort had given the nation a not unreasonable suspicion of feminine influence used in the interests of Roman Catholicism.

Caroline's intuitive gift for pleasing people was shown rather amusingly by the care she took to let it be known that she and the Prince entirely approved of the suggestion made by certain lively Welsh gentlemen that the feast of St. David, on March 1st, should be publicly celebrated. St. George's feast was still in those times kept as something of a national festival, but St. David had never been thus honoured, and so great was the delight of the Welsh residents in London at her Highness's ready participation in their wishes that, struck by "the remarkable circumstance" that the Princess's own birthday fell upon that particular festival, they instantly founded an Ancient British Society "for solemnizing the Princess's birthday and in commemoration of St. David." Her Highness's birthday was, accordingly, nobly celebrated by the entire capital. Flags flew and guns were fired, bonfires and illuminations blazed, and all the foreign ambassadors and nearly the whole body of peers, peeresses, and bishops thronged her levée. At night the Princess reciprocated this ovation by giving a ball "of which she was herself the brightest ornament." Her birthday continued to be, for many years, a day to be kept with public rejoicings.

London had been continually *en fête* for those six months

of 1714-15, and after the rather gloomy last years of Anne's reign, no doubt the presence of a new court, and especially of a sociable and popular Prince and Princess of Wales, was very welcome. But there was another aspect of the capital more usual than the festive one, and so soon as the feasts and largesses incident to the new accession were over this ugly side of London life began to be apparent, and may have made the Prince and Princess wonder whether they were really in the richest and largest city of Europe, or in the midst of a horde of barbarians. Before the year was out they had learnt that roaring mobs might fight each other with cudgels and fists, destroy property and even insult royalty with absolute impunity, and that for individuals of wealth and distinction the streets of the capital were less safe than any other place in the kingdom. The city authorities did not seem to consider themselves responsible when gentlemen were robbed in Bishopsgate Street or Paul's Churchyard, or murdered beside Gray's Inn, and in this land of constitutional freedom the sovereign was powerless to take steps to repress violence. In consequence, scarce a week passed without its quota of murders, robberies, and riots.

Often a football tussle of the boys in the street, or a cockshying was enough to set mischief going, for any noisy hustling in those narrow streets gave opportunity for theft. There were no lights shown in the streets, so that the hours of dusk and dark were positively dangerous. The few watchmen were still of the Dogberry and Verges brotherhood, and crept about in couples, for safety's sake, with a light they were afraid to show, and clubs they could not use. A pair of these worthies are seriously reported as giving their evidence how, on a certain night, they perceived a couple of rough men, known for mischief-makers, dogging another person, and the watch "thinking them bent on mischief, to avoid a fray turned

from them, going down Colson's Court to seek for the [parish] Constable at the Horse-Shoe tavern," but he not being to be found at his customary haunt they went no further—and the intended murder took place unhindered.

Thus it was no wonder that robbers grew bold. A countess in her sedan chair, attended by three footmen, was stopped by thieves on her way across St. James's Park, and the royal guards of the park came up only just in time to save her and her jewels from their clutches. A duchess was less fortunate, and was stripped of all her valuables on her way back from court close by the corner of Burlington House.

Occasionally a determined gentleman, like the Duke of Chandos, escorted by plucky servants, would face the robbers, and a little battle would rage amongst some dozen or half-dozen persons till several were laid dead. As for the stage-coaches which daily plied between the city and the outlying country villages, and the less frequent but regular coaches which served more distant places, they were constantly the prey of highwaymen. One day a gang blocked the road to Croydon for hours, and robbed all who came, coaches, horsemen, or pedestrians. On another day all the coaches out of Surrey were rifled. In one week of January, 1720, highwaymen plundered the afternoon coach to Hampstead (a country resort famous for horse-racing), the Bristol Mail, and the Chichester Mail, the last "in Battersea Bottom."

It was almost as bad in the rest of the country. Twice over a single "footpad" rifled all the mail-bags between Yeovil and Land's End, and took possession of the Plymouth and Exeter mail. The larger were the rewards paid by authority for information the more numerous became these disorders.[1]

To the royal family from orderly Hanover the im-

[1] *Cf.* Wright's Caricature History, contemporary newspapers, and Political State of Great Britain, vol. xi.

punity permitted to these marauders by English lenity and lack of police must have seemed contemptible indeed. Practically individuals were responsible for their own safety. In Hanover for half a century weapons had been worn only as a mark of rank; in London they were necessary for self-preservation. The City had its trained bands, the King his guards, but there was no authority which would dare to call out the soldiers to repress a violent mob, far less a band of highwaymen, in fact, to do so was to incur the penalties of murder, and it was naturally adjudged more sensible to let these fall on the highwaymen, who, to be sure, were sometimes caught and hanged.

Highwaymen, however, might be regarded as a permanent constitutional disease, and were not likely to interfere with their royal highnesses; more menacing, in their eyes, was the violence of the mobs which raised Jacobite war cries. London was always keenly political, whether intelligently or not, and loved to voice its opinion. The better classes supported a variety of newspapers and magazines characterized by their political animus and the utter lack of restraint with which, when without better arguments, they poured out the coarsest personal scurrilities.[1] The lower classes found also their political literature, but rather in the seditious ballads hawked about by orangewomen and shoe-boys, and sung in streets and markets. The taverns, like the coffee-houses which were now going out of fashion, relied on their regular clients. Such clubs and fellowships among the poorer classes—for the most part very informal—as

[1] The "Postboy," "Mist's (or Fog's) Weekly Journal" were Jacobite, the "Plebeian" and the "Craftsman" (begun 1727) opposition papers; the "Old Whig," the "Freeholder" (begun 1716), and the "Gentleman's Magazine" (1731) supported the government; the "Bee," the "Grub St. Journal" were literary but practically political; the "Daily Courant" and "Daily Post" were ordinary news sheets which observed propriety towards the government.

upheld the new *régime* were accustomed to gather at particular houses called "mug-houses," from the big mugs in which loyal healths were drunk, and a store of stout ash cudgels, "not unlike quarter staves," were kept ready for customers. Wild speeches often enough went with drinking of healths, which, in the disloyal houses, were generally thinly disguised. "Three pounds, fourteen shillings and fivepence," for instance, stood for "James III," Louis XIV, and Philip V of Spain.

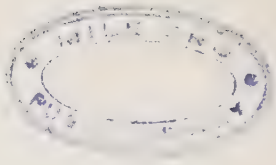
When excitement was thus stirred the company would promenade the streets in "a procession," carrying torches and emblems, and then the "Mugs," or Whigs, would in all probability encounter a troop of "Jacks" or Jacobites, and a free fight followed. The Whigs had a number of anniversaries to keep in the autumn—the new Prince of Wales's birthday, the late King William's, Gunpowder Plot, and Queen Elizabeth were celebrated on the 31st of October and the 4th, 5th, and 7th of November, while the Tories had days of animation chiefly in spring. They groaned over the death of William in March, on the 23rd of April kept Queen Anne's birthday, and celebrated her accession and the Restoration in May, so that Caroline's birthday on the 1st of March provided a welcome counter-demonstration for the Whigs. But the greatest day for Jacobite tumult was, of course, the Pretender's birthday on the 15th of June, when white roses were sold for 10*d.* apiece and worn in the buttonhole, to be snatched off with blows by the first zealous Whig who passed. The favourite cry of "High Church and Ormond" sounded harmless and decidedly antiquated, but the Whigs felt bound to protest, and would carry in their counter-processions the typical warming-pan, upon which unbearable insult a terrific onslaught was certain to be directed.

Over such trophies the rabble were raging in the streets in the first year of the new reign, while the grave mer-

chants of the Turkey Company, the Russia Company, the East India Company, and others were loyally addressing the King.

It was unlucky that the first serious riot of George I's reign was raised by his own guards and upon the royal birthday (28th May). On this occasion, when all fashionable persons dressed in new clothes to pay their respects to the sovereign, new clothing was always issued to the Household Guards, but that supplied on this occasion was of so unusually coarse a quality as to provoke an outburst. The men refused to don the insulting shirts and flung them into the royal garden at St. James's and that of the Duke of Marlborough opposite, and as they marched through the streets waved them about on the ends of their weapons, crying "These are the Hanover shirts!" The Duke of Marlborough himself had to pacify the soldiers by giving them barrels of beer "to drink the King's health," and ordering the obnoxious shirts to be burned. But though a lengthy inquiry was held into the business, it was found that every individual concerned, from the Duke to the tailors' cutters and fitters, was, of course, entirely clear of any responsibility.

In the meantime the abortive Jacobite rising, known as the Fifteen, was planning in Scotland, and before a threat of real danger the frothy demonstrations of the Tories died away, and London showed itself sufficiently Hanoverian to burn the effigy of the Pretender and shout "No Pretender, no wooden shoes." It was such an orderly crowd, too, complacently observed the Whig newspapers; nobody was knocked down, no windows were broken, not even a coach was robbed; this showed what a vast difference subsisted between Whig principles and Tory.



CHAPTER III

PRINCESS OF WALES: ENGLISH POLITICS, 1716-1717

THE only incident of the Jacobite rising of 1715 which closely affected the City or the court was the trial of the few rebels who were brought to London to be made an example of. So little harm had resulted from the rising, and so leniently did the nation regard political warfare, that a strong desire for mercy existed, and on behalf of the few leaders who had been picked out for punishment the greatest exertions were made. They were convicted of high treason, of course, but it was hoped that the King would spare their lives. George I, however, was never of a pardoning disposition. He was not desirous of hearing any petitions for mercy, and the wives and friends of the condemned lords found it almost impossible to reach him. They supposed that if only they could do so he would hardly court unpopularity by refusing grace, and great efforts were therefore made to induce the Princess of Wales to conduct them into his presence.

She, however, was wiser than the petitioners. Much as she sympathized with them, and generous as she always showed herself towards Jacobites, she knew how little her intercession could do for them and how much annoyed the King would be, and refused to lead what she knew to be a forlorn hope. Hereupon the Duchess of Bolton, who affected to consider herself a scion of the Stewart family (she was an illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Monmouth), endeavoured to reach the King by herself, and

offended the Princess by thrusting herself into her circle "to make believe she was one of the royal family" that she might go with them to His Majesty at his more private hour. But she only drew upon herself an open rebuke from Caroline, who was perfectly well able to preserve her own dignity. One lady, who succeeded in penetrating to the King's presence, but without securing his attention, flung herself on her knees and grasped the edge of his coat, but the resolutely ungracious monarch marched away dragging her along the floor some paces in her desperation.

The Princess went to work very quietly and privately for the prisoner in whom she ventured to interest herself. He was a certain Lord Carnwath, a relative of her special physician, Sir David Hamilton. Lady Cowper brought her a letter from him, and dutifully said that if the Princess had not a mind to receive it she would take the fault upon herself. "She took the letter and was much moved in reading it, and wept, and said, 'He must say more to save himself. Bid Sir David Hamilton go to him again and beg of him, for God's sake, to save himself by confessing. There is no other way, and I will give him my honour to save him if he will confess; but he must not think to impose upon people by professing to know nothing when his mother goes about talking as violently for Jacobitism as ever and says that her son falls in a glorious cause.'" Carnwath gave in and ceased to plead himself "not guilty." And according to Caroline's promise, he received in two days his reprieve, which finally led to a pardon.

Over this difficult matter of pressing or not pressing the King to show mercy to the prisoners the Prince and Princess had behaved with great discretion. It was doubly hard, therefore, that Caroline should be scolded by Baron Bernstorff on account of her husband's "activity." He had, it seemed, "done a great deal of harm

in talking about the King's prerogative in the House of Lords," so said the Baron. As a fact the Prince had made no speech, and in conversation had really tried to prevent the presenting of the petition which had offended His Majesty. It was clear that great jealousy existed lest the Prince or his wife should appear to have any influence in the conduct of government. Their every movement was liable to misinterpretation. Possibly Bernstorff, like the King, resented Caroline's interest in England, and her fancy that she saw through the English politicians, of whose selfishness she allowed herself to use some indiscreet plain speaking. Bernstorff had not as yet made any breach with the principal English ministers, Lord Townshend and Robert Walpole, and these Caroline had begun by detesting. She had told Bernstorff "he was an old fool to be so led by the nose by them." She chid the King also, and told him "he was grown lazy." He laughed and said he was busy from morning till night. She said: "Sir, I tell you they say the ministry does everything and you nothing." He smiled and said: "This is all the thanks I get for all the pains I take." But he did not forgive his daughter-in-law's boldness of speech.

The Scottish rebels appeared to have been put down by the efforts of the Duke of Argyll, who had been hurried off from London as general (in preference to Marlborough, whom no king now would dare to trust), to use his local power and influence for George I. It was already the second occasion on which the Hanoverian Succession was deeply indebted to this mighty Scottish nobleman; but the more ardent Whigs, who were certainly ignorant of the difficulties of warfare among Scotch hills and Scotch clans, and were probably animated by jealousy of the rich rewards obtained by the Duke and his *protégés*, clamoured that he fought half-heartedly, and wanted to leave himself a loophole for joining the other

side should it succeed in the end. The Duke's friends in London, especially those round the Prince and Princess of Wales, were, on the other hand, exclaiming that the responsible ministers expected Argyll to work miracles and supplied him insufficiently with men and money. The upshot was that on his triumphant return to London Argyll found neither thanks or reward, but was almost instantly dismissed from all his honourable employments by the direct orders of the King himself.

The political changes of the reign of George I were probably more personal in their causes than at any other time in our history. Not only the political rivalry of Townshend and Stanhope and other English and German ministers had to be reckoned with: Argyll's many lucrative posts were wanted for other cormorants; and the King had a cold dislike for the man with whom his son seemed to have struck up a cordial friendship, and whose kinsfolk obtained so much consideration in the princely court. George I was particularly irritated at this juncture by the discovery that when he paid that visit to Hanover upon which he was bent, and for the sake of which the ministers had procured an alteration of the Act of Settlement, he was expected to leave his son in the position of regent; and he could at the same time please his ministers, distress his son, and prove to the peerage that nothing could be obtained by the Prince's favour by the single act of disgracing Argyll—a blow which could be dealt quite safely now that the Duke's decided conduct in suppressing the Jacobite rising made it impossible for him to turn Tory out of revenge.

This was the first public indication of the double danger which was to beset English politics for the next half century: the enmity between the Sovereign and his heir, and the jealousies among the Whig leaders, each of whom strove to engross the royal confidence to himself alone, and the spoils of office to his own family and

friends. The memoirs and correspondence of these politicians and their great ladies throw a lurid light upon the standards and practices of English statesmen at that time. Each one is the solitary patriot, the single honest individual in a crowd of sycophants. But though so many of them were sufficiently desirous of the good opinion of posterity to leave carefully written memorials behind them, none reckoned sufficiently with the counter-revelations of his rivals.

At the beginning of the Hanoverian epoch the conduct of government was not as yet wholly detached from the Crown, and absorbed by the ministers; and Parliament, although indisputably supreme, was practically manipulated by the wealthy nobles, grouped almost in family gangs, as they continued to be throughout the century. Thus, at first, the personal relations of the principal peers with their sovereign had grave political importance; for it took the half-century covered by the reigns of George I and George II to transfer to the hands of the ministry the actual possession of that power and patronage which the two German monarchs were always obliged to wield through their hands; or, in other words, to render sacredly "constitutional" a system which was the simple result of the inability of George I to understand the English language and that of George II to fathom English politics.

It is a curious instance of the insularity of this nation that, although French was at that time the universal speech of polite Europe, hardly one of the principal figures in the English ministry and parliament had taken the trouble to master that tongue, far less to make himself acquainted with either the language or the politics of the new King's own country. Hence they met with great difficulty in trying to court a monarch who must be talked to in French, German, or Latin, whose interests were exclusively German, and who had no tastes. Almost

the only way of approaching him was through one of the Hanoverians—Bernstorff, Bothmer, and Robethon, or through Baroness Schulenburg, her "niece" Lady Walsingham, or her rival Madame Kielmansegg. In matters political the German ministers formed an inner secret cabinet, animated by purely Hanoverian interests; in matters personal, or wholly English, their influence might be purchased. Baroness Schulenburg was rapacious perhaps beyond any female favourite in English records, and expected to be made a paid intermediary in political, ecclesiastical, and military appointments to a degree hitherto unknown in this country. Bernstorff demanded an acquiescence in his political and personal schemes which no English minister could accord for long; while Robethon seems to have evinced something of the security, as well as the rapacity, of a personal favourite of the sovereign. An additional reason for the dislike with which the English of the better class regarded them was the coarseness of their manners.

As the Act of Settlement forbade the ennobling of any foreigner in England, George I made use of Ireland, which then still rejoiced in its own parliament, to satisfy the claims of his favourites. Melusina von der Schulenburg was created Baroness, Countess, and Duchess of Munster; and heavy pensions were assigned to her and to others to be paid out of the revenues of the unfortunate "independent" kingdom. Not that either Melusina or her King was satisfied by this; and the ministers had to gratify them by passing a special Act, as early as possible (June, 1716), to naturalize her, when she was created Duchess of Kendal, and given other and English emoluments. Another way of evading the restrictions of the Act was to keep a few of the Household offices vacant, the King privately paying the salaries over to Germans. Many of these posts were now little more than lucrative sinecures; and the English nobles, who re-

garded them as their own due, resented the royal attempt to treat them as if they were actually what they ostensibly were supposed to be, in his own gift.

Nor did the foreigners at first find out how solid a resistance was sure to meet their attempts to interfere with the affairs of England. As Hanover and Great Britain were now united, apparently for ever, under one sceptre, the wiser English statesmen saw that joint interests must be considered; and Lord Townshend, Lord Stanhope, and Sir Robert Walpole were ready enough to discuss European policy with Bernstorff; while Lord Chancellor Cowper, whose post made him the constant official counsellor of the King, tried through his wife, who was an excellent linguist, to concert a kind of alliance with the Hanoverians. But in the first days of the new government Bernstorff's arrogance disconcerted their hopes. He took an opportunity of upbraiding Lady Cowper vehemently for her own and her husband's activity in politics, apparently thinking himself entitled to resent the Chancellor's advice to the King, and to berate an English peeress like some common minion. Her ladyship was amazed: she "thought it was the first time that ever an English lady that had bread to put into her mouth had been so treated." Particularly annoying to individuals were, too, the greed and impertinence of the hangers-on of these royal favourites. Baron Bernstorff, for instance, had brought over "a niece," who continually pestered the Lord Chancellor's wife, practically as a spy, for Lady Cowper was attached to the suite of the Princess, and Bernstorff and Robethon secretly fomented the ill will between the Prince and the King. The girl was persistent in her efforts to obtain gifts and "borrow" jewels to wear. To be sure Lady Cowper "does not care one farthing for setting myself out, and I hope always to make it my study rather to adorn my mind than set off a vile body of dust and ashes"; still, she was going to the King's birthday

reception herself, so when this Miss Schutz desired the loan of her pearl necklace—"being of so great a value I thought I had as good put it into my hair." But no amount of snubbing could keep Miss Schutz from coming to spend whole afternoons and evenings with "her dear Mrs. Cowper," and asking all manner of questions about the Prince and Princess.

Every trivial incident might conceal a design. Madame Kielmansegg meets Lady Cowper at a supper party given to the King, and makes friends with her. Lady Cowper has the pleasant task of collecting certain learned books which the Princess wants to see, among them the whole of the works of Lord Bacon; Madame Kielmansegg hereupon sends Lady Cowper a volume which she asks her to give to the Princess, and only after presenting it does the poor lady in waiting get a friendly warning from Mrs. Howard that there is a mortal hatred between the Kielmansegg and their mistress, who thinks her a wicked woman. The sending of the book "was a Design to persuade the Princess that she was very well with me, in order to ruin my credit with her, for," as Mrs. Howard explained, "if it had not been so she would have sent it either by the Duchess of Bolton or Shrewsbury, that are so well with her, but she never stuck a Pin into her Gown without a Design." Caroline, however, was not of a temper to be tricked into suspicion by such paltry artifices, and still continued to put confidence in the integrity of the Chancellor and his wife.

While the Germans were being permitted to treat this kingdom as a reservoir of money for them to tap, certain of the English ministers set to work to purchase their new king's favour, firstly, by enabling him to increase his Hanoverian dominions[1] by a lavish expenditure of

[1] His annexation by purchase of Bremen and Verden, which threatened to drag England into war with Sweden and stimulated that power's assistance of Jacobite plots.

English money and the use of the English fleet; secondly, and equally in defiance of the Act of Settlement, by enabling him to bestow titles and pensions upon his Germans; and, thirdly, by ministering to his extravagant dislike of his son, so as to combine the disgrace of the Prince of Wales with that of their personal rivals in the ministry, Townshend and Walpole. The skilful politicians who thus secured to themselves the favour of George I were the distinguished general and able diplomatist, Lord Stanhope, now Secretary of State, and the over-clever Sunderland, Marlborough's son-in-law. The idea seems to have originated with Sunderland, that Lord Townshend and Robert Walpole might be represented to George I as instigators of ambition in the Prince of Wales. Stanhope, who agreed with the King's foreign policy, was not wholly in agreement with Townshend in that matter, a fact which widened the breach between them when once opened. The scheme, however, took a year to bring to completion, so that when the King set out for Hanover all in the English ministry still appeared outwardly harmonious, and only the disgrace of the Duke of Argyll gave any warning of the possibility of sudden changes.

On his departure, in July, 1716, the Prince of Wales was left "Guardian of the Realm and Lieutenant," an ancient title preferred by George I to that of Regent, under the impression that it somehow minimized his son's importance. He had been reluctant to leave the Prince in authority at all, but the ministers had insisted that it was necessary for the maintenance of public confidence. For it was something of a shock to the general tranquillity that the new king should so soon retire from the kingdom on a holiday which, as he announced, was to last for half a year.

Throughout the reigns of the first two Georges their journeys to Hanover were most unpopular, not from any

affection for the person of the sovereign, but because it was not yet certain that order could be preserved without him. His absence encouraged Jacobite plots, and both trade and fashion languished a little without the visible head of society, while there was, besides, a suspicion, in the reign of George I but too well founded, that the King was pouring English money into Hanoverian purses, and subordinating English political interests to those of his electorate.

George I, however, departed as early as he could, taking Lord Stanhope with him, and left to Townshend and Walpole the hard task of keeping the Prince of Wales in a good humour without allowing him any power or responsibility, or any opportunities of listening to the blandishments of the Tories or of the opposition Whigs. The prime difficulty of the ministers was that there were not, and never could be, enough places and salaries to go round. Every member of the government expected posts for half his kinsfolk, and almost every member of the great noble families expected to be in the government. A principal cause of feud between the English and the German ministers was the appointment to the lucrative offices, and this was the cause of the jealousies among the English nobles themselves. The great majority of them were Whigs, who might feel sure of a long tenure of power by their party, but there were two or three claimants for every post, and their greed split the Whig party into factions, animated by no principle but the simple one of securing all the places for their own group.

Almost as soon as George I started, Sunderland, supported by the prestige and wealth of the Duke of Marlborough, and the energy of the Duchess, began an intrigue against the ministers. He determined to travel to Hanover, as any private person might do, and attend the King's court there, and he came first to Hampton

Court, as was correct, to pay his parting respects to the regent, whose permission to travel he must formally obtain. On this occasion he presumed to treat the Princess with disrespect. He held a conversation with her in the famous "Queen's Gallery," and spoke so loud that Caroline "desired him to speak lower, for the people in the garden would hear," to which he answered: "Let them hear." The Princess added: "Well, if you have a mind, let 'em, but you shall walk next the windows, for in the Humour we both are in, one of us must certainly jump out at the window, and I'm resolved it shan't be me."[1] When Sunderland reached Hanover he speedily succeeded in making common cause with Stanhope, whose ability to converse with the King, together with his support of the line of foreign policy George was intent upon, were fast making him a favourite. The interest of the Germans was won or purchased, and a schism shortly declared itself in the Whig ranks.

Stanhope and Sunderland played on the King's jealousy, and insinuated that their colleagues at home were intriguing with the Prince of Wales. George I had tied his son's hands as much as he could, but the Prince, aided by his wife, "cette diablesse Madame la Princesse" as his Majesty called her, was showing an aptitude for acquiring popularity, which unfortunately but seldom characterized his behaviour in later years. He pleased the Princess's ladies vastly by avowing himself delighted with the English—"the best, the handsomest, the best-shaped, the best-natured, and lovingest people in the world; if anybody would make their court to him it must be by telling him he was like an Englishman." He made no bad figure-head of the government during the King's absence. He was always fond of detail, and enjoyed presiding in the Council and signing papers;

[1] P. Wentworth.

business was never put off. A few popular orders had been left for him to execute, such as decreeing a general pardon for over one hundred Jacobite prisoners, and declaring intercourse between Dover and Calais freely open again, and the populace ascribed these gracious actions to the Prince's own initiative.

At the same time the Princess was pleasing the great ladies by her accessibility. "She 's the most charming, delightful Friend as well as Mistress"—"so very easy and obliging." *Easy* is the favourite term, it signified *considerate.*

To Hampton Court came all such courtiers, Whig or Tory, as hoped to make a favourable impression on their Royal Highnesses. Those nobles whose mansions lay within reach offered banquets, and the Prince was always ready to drive fifteen or twenty miles to their entertainments, and even ventured upon a three days' tour in the south-eastern counties to visit grandees and inspect regiments and ships.

Caroline was only occasionally able to go with her husband, as she was expecting her confinement in the autumn, but she succeeded in visiting the famous Castle of Windsor, a place which appealed to her sense of beauty and dignity, but did not suit the tastes of her husband. But for the most part her life was of the quiet tenour in which gracious manners show to the best advantage. The country folk were charmed to see that she would bid her ladies and servants make way for strangers, and would "talk to a country lass in a straw hat with the same gracious air her Royal Highness entertains Persons of the first distinction, and yet at the same time lose nothing of her native grandeur." Thus the Prince and Princess "gained the hearts of all that had the happiness to see them," insomuch that the Bailiff of Kingston, hitherto a hot Tory, went home and took down the portraits of Ormond and Sacheverell,

which he exiled to his worst outhouse and replaced by pictures of their Royal Highnesses.

Lady Cowper describes the manner in which Caroline usually spent the day at this time, after her less formal morning of walking, reading, and talking with the Prince was over:—"The Prince and Princess dined in public every day in the Princess's apartment. The Lady in Waiting served at table. . . . In the afternoon the Princess saw company or read or writ till the evening, and then walked in the garden, sometimes two or three hours together, and then went into the pavilion at the end of the bowling green and played there [*i.e.*, at cards]. This she did very frequently, till, one rainy and dark night, the Countess of Bückeburg fell and put her foot out of joint, and I think after that accident the Princess went there no more, but used to play in the Green gallery from nine to about half-an-hour past ten. The Duchess of Monmouth used to be there: the Princess loved her mightily, and certainly no Woman of her years ever deserved it so well. She had all the life and fire of youth, and it was marvellous to see that the many afflictions she had suffered had not touched her wit and good nature, but at upwards of threescore she had both in their full perfection.

"Sometimes the Princess used to ask Company to sup with her in the Countess of Buckebourg's chamber, and I can't but set it down that once at table there was the Princess, the Countess of Buckebourg, myself, Lady Townshend, the Duchess of Shrewsbury, and the Duchess of St. Alban's, and that all their fortunes together did not make eleven thousand pounds."

The Prince was kept with some difficulty by Townshend and Walpole from appearing too often in public or from accepting attentions which might result in placing him in an apparent opposition to his father. This was what the Tory politicians designed, and they bethought themselves of intimating their spleen against the govern-

ment by getting up loyal addresses to the regent. It required all Walpole's skill to convince the Prince of the double-edged nature of the compliment and induce him to refuse to receive any addresses made to himself personally. Prince George had no desire whatever to become the tool of the disaffected, but it was not in his nature to dissemble, and it soon became evident that he had a liking for several persons on whom his father looked coldly, and that the very fact that Argyll had been, or appeared to have been, ill-used, had given him more credit than before with the regent. His Grace was most assiduous in his attendance at Hampton Court, and the Prince and Princess marked their friendliness to him by going to pay him a visit at his Greenwich mansion almost the moment after the King left England. The discontented Whigs and the Tories were able to mix with the purely fashionable world of London in thronging the Prince's levées and the Princess's drawing-room, and were very careful to pay every attention which might court royal favour. The two ministers, therefore, made a point of trying to counteract the impressions likely to be made in this way by themselves attending on the regent continually. Walpole came over to Hampton Court three times a week, and Townshend seemed to be ever at the Prince's side, and when he could not himself come would send a member of his family to represent him. They hoped thus to baffle the possible intrigues of Argyll and his faction, and even gratified the court by "keeping a green table" for play, burdensome though it was. Walpole complained in his letters that he was being worked like any galleyslave.

But all this, and doubtless much more, was reported to the King by Baron Bothmer, who, by the King's orders, had been established in apartments at Hampton Court, as a kind of dignified spy, to report whatever occurred. His information, seeming to tally with the representations of Sunderland, impressed the King, who was

without much difficulty led to suppose that the two ministers were abetting the Prince of Wales in setting himself up in a sort of opposition to his father.

It is difficult to see how else Townshend and Walpole could have acted. To understand their anxiety and the restlessness of the titled intriguers it must be recollected that the King's long visit to his German dominions was perturbing everybody. Many thought that he did not mean to return to England at all: it was rumoured that he had "threatened" not to do so, if his son or the ministers should offend him. Lord Peterborough, who paid a visit to Hanover, wrote home sarcastically that his Majesty was living there so happily that he "believed he had forgot the accident that happened to him and his family the 1st of August, 1714"!

There was some doubt, too, how much longer government could go on without the sovereign, since it was not certain whether Parliament could meet unless he would send over a special mandate or else authorize the regent to open the session for him, and he would not listen to either of these propositions, nor fix any date for his return. Without the parliamentary session government would come to a standstill, and the mobs in London and in several of the large towns, reckoning on the slackness of authority, broke into riots of unusual violence, unchecked.

It is rather curious that several peculiar natural phenomena had coincided with political events to increase the general excitement. There had been, first, the extraordinary frost of the winter of 1715-16, which lasted for weeks together, and was so intense that even peeresses complained that they could scarce keep warm in their furs beside large fires; the poor must have suffered terribly. The Thames was frozen over for weeks, shops were set up on the ice, carts and coaches made a regular roadway of the frozen stream and bonfires were even lighted on it

to roast meat for popular feasts. Then the thaw came so suddenly that the lawyers who had walked along the ice to Westminster in the morning returned to their Inns in the afternoon by boat, and yet nobody was drowned. April had witnessed a total eclipse of the sun (from 8.6 till 10.20 a.m.), so amazing that shopkeepers were scared into closing their shops, and chairmen into falling on their knees to pray in the street. In the summer an extreme of drought had been experienced, so prolonged that the bed of the Thames had appeared, and when one day a violent wind blew it nearly dry, thousands of persons walked across it dryshod both above and below London Bridge.[1]

Perhaps, when these natural disturbances were over, it was not surprising that the mobs should gather to riot in the autumn months rather more desperately than was customary. London was terrorized for several days in September, and Oxford, next month, was twice in the hands of a Tory mob shouting for King James.

There was nothing personal to the Prince and Princess of Wales in these outbreaks. In fact, George, this winter, attained to some favour with the commoner sort. Two dangerous fires broke out in the City in the first week of December, and he hurried to assist in person, animating the people to such exertions as extinguished the conflagration, and when he heard how great was the damage done, he sent £1,000 to relieve the sufferers—"truly Guardian of the people," as they exclaimed. Great was the general indignation when a man named Freeman, apparently a lunatic, made an attempt to assassinate the regent in his box at Drury Lane theatre, and actually did shoot the sentinel who stopped him. The Prince's perfectly calm demeanour during the uproar won him fresh encomiums.

[1] *Cf.* "Surveys of London by a Citizen," 1727 and 1742, also Trusler's "Survey," 1739.

The summer had long been over before George and Caroline could tear themselves away from the charm of Hampton Court and return to town. "The 28th October" (notes Lady Cowper) "the Court left Hampton Court. The ladies came with the Prince and Princess by water in a barge. The day was wonderfully fine and Nothing in the world could be pleasanter than the passage, nor give one a better idea of the riches and happiness of this kingdom."

In a week's time the Court was plunged into anxiety by the dangerous confinement of the Princess. Apparently nobody knew how to communicate with the German nurse, who got the impression that the anxious recommendations of Caroline's ladies were threats, and she begged the Prince's protection against these "English Frows," who, she declared, were threatening to hang her in case of disaster! "This put the Prince in such a passion that he swore he would fling out of window whoever had said so, or pretended to meddle. The Duchesses of St. Albans and Bolton happened to come into the room and were saluted with these expressions. Everybody's tone was now changed, and nothing was talked of but the Princess's safety." Even Lord Townshend, in his zeal to conciliate, happening to meet the nurse in an ante-chamber, "ran and shook and squeezed her by the hand and made kind faces at her, for she understood no language but German." The baby was born dead, however. Caroline was in the greatest danger for twenty-four hours, and for several days after extreme anxiety prevailed.

In the meantime the Prince and Princess were happily unconscious that at Bath Marlborough and his indefatigable Duchess were the centre of schemes and rumours. There "nothing was talked of but the great Things that were to be done when the King came over" (*i.e.*, from Germany). Knowing people were speculating

whether Sunderland and Stanhope would be able to find enough support to form a ministry and carry a majority with them, and whether they would not have to join with the Tories to get a sufficient number of votes and brains: "but as we have no war we don't care what Parliament we have—Whig or Tory," as one sycophant expressed himself, with a philosophy not unknown in later periods.[1]

Caroline, in these early days, hardly seems to have shown among the crowd of intriguers the sagacity which she afterwards developed. She could hardly, perhaps, have been expected to gauge the worth of their professions at once. But she allowed herself to speak plainly, sometimes, among her ladies, and they may not always have been discreet, though it seems clear that not one of them ever intentionally betrayed her. Caroline disliked both Townshend and Walpole, neither of whom had shown any particular deference to the Prince until he became regent, and she termed the former "the sneeringest, falsest Knave that ever was." He was for ever trying, she declared, to put on a Mask "which is no better than an Ass's face," adding the reflection "that Knavery is of very little usefulness when it puts one so out of Countenance." Now Lord Townshend is generally described as a hot, even violent tempered man, and downright in his conversation to the point of coarseness, so it may perhaps be supposed that, aware of having no manners suited to the company of a Princess, he was making a visible effort to adopt them. He and Walpole were not at this time judicious in their method of dealing with the Prince of Wales. They had not yet discovered who was the real power behind him, and as everybody at court was aware of his fancy for Mary Bellenden, they paid a great deal of attention to her and her friend Mrs. Howard, who was already rumoured to be the Prince's mistress, supposing that through this channel George was to be influenced.

[1] Peter Wentworth.

Throughout her life this line of conduct was almost the only thing which Caroline could never forgive, nor perhaps is this either very remarkable or very reprehensible. The Princess was practically ignored by the two ministers as a negligible person, and though she took no overt notice, the Prince having been for the time won by Lord Townshend's assiduous court, her ladies were well aware of the position, and the Chancellor's wife felt so uneasy that she got her husband to remonstrate with his two colleagues and produce a different style of behaviour.

Caroline's initial mistake had been an innocent attempt to interfere in that precious department, ministerial patronage. She had, not unnaturally, supposed that the expressed wishes of her husband and herself would meet with attention in the disposition of places, and she exposed herself to some severe and not always polite rebuffs by letting her preferences be known. Mr. Clayton, for example, had been constantly pressed upon the ministers for a higher post in the Treasury than his abilities or connections seemed to warrant. It was a distasteful experience to find herself wholly without influence of this sort, especially as the placemen preferred by the ministers were often persons of no better credit than those favoured by their Royal Highnesses, particularly when they were introduced under the auspices of the German clique.[1]

Not only did Caroline, at this time, harbour a dislike for Lord Townshend, which in fact she never lost, and doubts of Walpole, which were soon to be entirely forgotten, but she put more confidence in Bernstorff than that devoted henchman of George I by any means deserved of her. Bernstorff evidently had a talent for im-

[1] In 1719 even James Craggs was protesting against "these sales of offices and other underhand dealing"; "there is no distinction of persons or circumstances: Jacobites, Tories, Papists, at the Exchange or in the Church, by land or by sea, during the session or in the recess—nothing is objected to, provided there is money."

pressing women; Lady Cowper believed in him in spite of his rudeness to her. It may be remembered that the unhappy wife of George I had done the same. In the same way did Caroline at first place trust in Robethon, the King's half-French secretary.[1] When her ladies were offended by this man's appearance at dinner "either drunk or so impertinent there 's no bearing him," the Princess maintained to them that he was the best man in the world, though, she allowed, he became insupportable when he pretended to be witty or pleasant. In 1716 Robethon was with the King abroad, showing off Anglo-Hanoverian unity by "making a treat" to all the English gentlemen in Hanover on the occasion of Mr. Walpole's birthday, while Walpole, undazzled, was at the very time reminding Stanhope that "Robethon's impertinence is so notorious, that we must depend upon it he does all the mischief he possibly can; but if the heads can be set right, such little creatures must come in course, or may be despised." The Princess had not yet been made aware that all the German ministers had opposed her husband's nomination as regent, and had supported the King in his wish to leave behind him some council or commission which might exclude the Prince altogether. Robethon had actually said to Lady Cowper, whose relations with Bernstorff he probably misunderstood, that he hoped that the King's restrictions might be made so unpalatable that the Prince would refuse the office. He assured her ladyship that she did not know the Prince, "'he only wanted power to displace everybody the King liked and dissolve the Parliament.' *This was a strange Rant*," observes Lady Cowper with some justice.

With regard to her own ladies, too, the Princess was

[1] For his political merits see "English Historical Review," vol. xiii; for his greed and unpleasantness most of the contemporary memoirs.

not yet quite sure of her footing. Mrs. Clayton she had begun to trust implicitly, as she continued to do through life, but Lady Cowper also was at this time possessed of her confidence, though not destined to retain it for long. The Prince's devotion to Mary Bellenden, brief though it was, perturbed Caroline, as it seems, and she visited something of her displeasure upon the personage who had introduced Mary at court—the Duchess of Roxburgh. There was some political significance in this, for the Duke of Roxburgh, the successful rival of Argyll in the King's favour, aimed at courting the Prince as well, and perceiving that his young kinswoman had captivated His Highness, took it for granted that she would use her power, and might be brought to use it for his ends. He wrote her a wily letter to explain the opinions which she was desired to inculcate in the Prince, and which it was hoped the Duchess would be able to instill into the Princess. Mary, indignant and uncompromising, forthwith carried letter and all straight to the Prince. It was a great deal too much for the Roxburghs, who were practically obliged to retire from the Princess's court, where indeed Caroline showed her displeasure so markedly, that people gossiped about it, and in a set of satirical verses handed about in society, as the custom was, the prim and portly Duchess was derided, not without a covert glance at the Princess herself:

> . . . Ah Princess, with what zeal have I pursued!
> Almost forgot the duty of a prude.
> Thinking I never could attend too soon
> I've missed my prayers, to get me dressed by noon.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The Prince is ogled, some the King pursue,
> But your *Roxana* only follows you.
> —Despised *Roxana*, cease, and try to find
> Some other since the Princess is unkind.
> Perhaps it is not hard to find at court
> If not a greater, a more firm support.

The verses were written by young Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and the last lines, of course, alluded to the power of the royal mistresses. It is not surprising that Caroline did not encourage the audacious Lady Mary, who stood so well with the King and his Germans, and with the Marlboroughs and the Craggses. The Prince readily enough admired the lively beauty. He once called on his wife to observe how becomingly she was dressed. Caroline looked up from her cards with the chilly, though polite, remark: "Lady Mary always dresses well." In those days it was polite to comment upon clothes, and rude to comment upon health.

The Princess need not, as events showed, have felt any uneasiness on the score of Miss Bellenden. The beautiful and witty Mary had little belief in politics and a great deal in her mistress. She was clear as daylight, and would have no compromising compliments from the Prince of Wales, for her honour was at least as strong as her spirits. The story is famous how His Highness persisted in showing his admiration, and how the lively maiden endeavoured to check his advances by unconventional expressions of independence. But it was impossible to avoid the Prince when the whole company went strolling in the gardens of Hampton Court, or broke up of an evening into small groups round the different card tables. And on one of these occasions the royal suitor, sitting beside Miss Bellenden, kept telling over a handful of chinking guineas, doubtless as a hint, the intensely insulting nature of which would not be obvious to his ducal Hanoverian mind, until Mary Bellenden cried out, "Sir, I can bear it no longer; if you count your money any more I shall go out of the room." Another version of the tale has it that she more than carried out her threat, and by a sudden movement flung the money out of his hand and, as it spun over the floor, ran lightly away.

Mary was ice to the Prince, but she was attentive to the honest courtship of a poor gentleman of his suite, the handsome Colonel John Campbell, a cousin of the Duke of Argyll; and when George, rather admiring than resenting her bold rejection of his advances, begged her to be frank with him, she had the courage to own that her affection was engaged to another, whose name, however, she would not tell. The Prince had the generosity to reply that if she would confide wholly in him and promise not to marry without his approval she should make her choice freely, and he would treat her husband with favour. She gave the promise, but, alas, broke it. Possibly she doubted the Prince's resolution and was afraid of injuring Colonel Campbell, for she married her lover secretly and only told the Prince some months later, when the match was publicly announced. She need not have feared: George was never vindictive, and he never showed any ill-will to the Colonel, who remained for many years one of his bedchamber; but he could not forgive Mary for breaking her promise, and when she appeared at court afterwards would always upbraid her with it, so that she hardly knew how to brook the reproof.

Caroline's court was quite a harbour of lovers at this time, for there was young John Hervey, the worthy Earl of Bristol's handsome son, courting the lovely Molly Lepell, and the soldierly, awe-inspiring Duke of Argyll rousing the mirth of the ladies by his devotion to the most plain and commonplace of the maids of honour, Jenny Warburton. Private interests, however, were not just then attracting general attention; the lovers conducted their courtships unobserved, while important people were absorbed in the dilemma how either to call Parliament together or to leave it unsummoned. Walpole, not yet grasping the reason of the King's obduracy, reported to him that the Prince would like to open Parlia-

ment, and, since leaving it prorogued much longer would plunge the government into great difficulties, financial and military, asked, somewhat innocently, that His Highness might have the necessary permission to issue the formal orders.

This was giving Sunderland and Stanhope the finest weapon they could wish for, especially as Walpole had previously written that he suspected that the Prince had an idea of obtaining "an interest of his own in Parliament," that he "wanted to know everything," and showed himself "inquisitive about the revenue," an awkward matter, no doubt, for the ministers or the Germans. He called for a great many papers to study, but, as Walpole imagined, "other people study 'em more than he." Townshend, too, with singular want of tact, had endeavoured to back up his own opinion on foreign policy by quoting the Prince's, almost as if it were good advice to the King, so that Stanhope, whose views coincided rather with the King's than with Townshend's on the all-important question of the French alliance, had some reasonable ground if he insinuated that the two ministers were not doing their best for the King, and that the Prince was interfering in a sphere not his.

No answer, therefore, was returned to the inquiry about the meeting of Parliament, and the anxious ministers continued to mark time and keep down the Prince's activity till, early in December, the blow fell.

Royal orders were addressed to the discomfited regent to dismiss Lord Townshend from his post by making him Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, a recognized method of filling the pockets of a dismissed minister and masking his disgrace. Ireland, whither damaged hearts and reputations used, in those days, often to retire to take a cure of unconventional and inexpensive gaiety, seldom saw its Lord-Lieutenant.

Townshend's dismissal practically produced a stand-

still in the work of government, "to the particular concern of the well-affected to the present settlement"; and the populace of London betook themselves to rioting with renewed zeal in the belief that there was no one to punish them. Regular street battles took place, and as the coroner was a Tory, verdicts of murder all lay against Whigs, and only by an unusual stretch of authority could the government contrive to hang a few of the mob leaders.

The new year 1717 was in before the King returned and Sunderland and Stanhope manifested their complete triumph. Townshend was then dismissed from the Irish post he had had the weakness to accept, and Walpole anticipated any similar disgrace by resigning at once. Sunderland and Stanhope now openly conducted the government, Craggs got his Secretaryship at War, and the rest of the posts were filled by highly reputable but inexperienced persons, including Mr. Addison and a row of useless dukes.

The Prince was not openly involved in the political catastrophe, though every one understood that the reconstruction of the ministry was against his interests, and much curiosity was felt to see how certain courtiers would look, and how be received in the different drawing-rooms of the King and the Prince of Wales. For a few months longer harmony was outwardly preserved in the royal family, and the Prince and Princess were to be seen with His Majesty on state occasions, such as the opening of the impeachment of the Earl of Oxford in Westminster Hall. They accompanied the King also to Hampton Court for the summer of 1717, but, to judge from the description of Pope, His Majesty's presence made life there a great deal duller. His presence was apt to do that in any company, by unanimous testimony. Pope wrote to his friends, the Miss Blounts, on 13th September, 1717: "I went by water to Hampton Court

Elwin and Courthope's "Pope," vol. ix, p. 272.

[he lived at Twickenham], unattended by all but my own virtues, which were not of so modest a nature as to keep themselves, or me, concealed; for I met the Prince with all his ladies, on horseback, coming from hunting. Mrs. B[ellenden] and Mrs. L[epell] took me into protection, contrary to the laws against harbouring papists, and gave me a dinner, with something I liked better, an opportunity of conversing with Mrs. H[oward]. We all agreed that the life of a Maid of Honour was of all things the most miserable; and wished that every woman who envied it had a specimen of it. To eat Westphalia ham in a morning, ride over hedges and ditches on borrowed hacks, come home in the heat of the day with the fever and (what is worse a hundred times) with a red mark on the forehead from an uneasy hat! All this may qualify them to make excellent wives for foxhunters, and bear abundance of ruddy complexioned children. As soon as they can wipe off the sweat of the day, they must simper an hour in the Princess's apartment; from thence (as Shakespeare has it) to dinner, with what appetite they may;—and after that, till midnight, walk, work or think, which they please. I can easily believe no lone house in Wales, with a mountain and a rookery, is more contemplative than this Court; and as a proof of it, I need only tell you Miss L[epell] walked with me three or four hours by moonlight, and we met no creature of any quality but the King, who gave audience to the Vice-Chamberlain, all alone, under the garden walk.

"In short, I heard of no ball, assembly, basset table, or any place, where two or three were gathered together, except Madam Kilmansegg's, to which I had the honour to be invited, and the grace to stay away."

Mr. Pope, however, composed his letters, and as he used up some of these good sentences in another letter a year later, we may suppose his playful description of miseries to have been penned with an eye to the literary

effect. "Three or four hours" must have been an habitual expression of the period for "a considerable time," since the day does not contain the number of hours sometimes accounted for by the lively writers of descriptions which have become famous.

Caroline and her husband, already aware of the King's jealousy, probably refrained purposely from taking the lead in gay society, and their domestic tastes, or rather those of George, engaged them for many hours privately with their children and immediate servants. It is to this period that the Duchess of Marlborough's graphic tale of the royal nursery belongs. Going to visit the Prince and Princess, she found one of the children screaming after having received a whipping. The Duchess tried to hush and comfort the child. "Ay!" said the Prince, "you English are none of you well bred, because you was not whipped when you was young." "I thought to myself," quoth Sarah, when she told the tale, "'I am sure *you* could not have been whipped when you were young!' but I choked it in."

CHAPTER IV

THE QUARREL WITH THE KING

GEORGE I considered that during his absence from England his son's conduct had given him ground for deep indignation, though in what particulars he never declared. And, being unable to fix upon any point which might afford sufficient excuse for manifesting anger, he was on the watch for some slip on the Prince's part to give an opportunity, however slender. He felt nothing but resentment at the popularity which his son, and yet more "cette diablesse" his daughter-in-law, had achieved in England, much though it redounded to the credit, and therefore the stability, of the new dynasty. Possibly he was aware that they were liked because in several respects they contrasted so markedly with himself: their court was English, and was pure; they evinced a happy domestic attachment to each other and to their little children; their income was neither squandered upon foreign favourites nor sent out of the country, nor could any one fasten upon them the blame of the scandalous jobbery in titles, places, and pensions, which made the circle immediately round the King a shameless mart.

The quarrel which broke out in the royal family at the close of the year 1717 almost assumed the proportions of an actual political disaster; for Caroline it was a calamity for which she was in no wise to blame, which darkened her life for many years, and left a gloomy shadow even over her more successful epoch of queenship.

The King's grudge against his son had, as has been seen, been made some use of in the intrigues which ousted Townshend and Walpole from office; but it was excited to a higher pitch by the Germans, who knew that their influence in politics and their power to plunder rested wholly upon the King. The Prince of Wales discovered Robethon's real bias against him as soon as his father returned, and with his customary directness turned his back and "cut" the secretary, thereby causing some sensation. Bothmer, more politic, was able to preserve appearances, and would dine with the chiefs of both parties, the King's and the Prince's—for thus, unhappily, the principal politicians and peers had come to be classified. He overdid his part, however, when he insolently informed the retiring ministers, as it was reported, that "if they would not be friends the King knew where to have another set of ministers."

Caroline had realized that it was important for her husband to keep on good terms with the German clique, notwithstanding the personal dislike which she and Madame Kielmansegg felt for one another. She had offered to Bernstorff and to Robethon what each had readily accepted, a sop, termed a "pension," of £300 a year out of her own or the Prince's resources. But the acceptance of the money and the resentful pressing for it, when Robethon's payment through inadvertence fell into arrear, did not imply that they would exert their influence for the peace of the Prince and Princess. Caroline at length recognized their treachery, which came upon her with something of a shock, and she roundly "called Robethon a knave and Baron Bothmer another."[1]

The occasion chosen for the bursting of the storm was peculiarly cruel to Caroline. She and her husband had, in the autumn of 1717, returned to their apartments at St. James's to await the birth of the expected child, leaving

[1] Lady Cowper.

the King still at Hampton Court. To the extreme delight of the royal family and of the loyal citizens of London the infant born on 13th November (N.S.) was a prince. George was in an ecstasy of joy, almost beside himself, and sent off one of the Herveys to inform the King. His Majesty speedily came to pay the paternal and royal visit which the occasion required, and was present at the christening, which followed as quickly as was possible. The Prince of Wales begged his father to stand as one godparent, and his uncle, the prince-bishop of Osnabrück, Duke of York, as the other, of course by proxy. But George I seized the occasion to insult his son by himself cancelling the latter request and naming as second godfather the Duke of Newcastle, a nobleman towards whom the Prince felt a particular dislike.

The ceremony took place in the Princess's bedroom. The Prince stood with the ladies of honour on one side of Caroline's bed, the King and the Duke of Newcastle on the other. The moment the ceremony was over the Prince vented his wrath on the Duke, whom he conceived to be paying his court to the King by thus insulting him. Stepping round the foot of the bed he shook his hand at Newcastle with accusatory forefinger, saying vehemently, "You are a rascal; but I shall find you!" (*i.e.*, pay you out). The King, who was on the point of leaving the room, did not understand what he said, but Newcastle "thought himself obliged" to go and tell him. It was the longed-for opportunity. George I affected to think his son's angry words equivalent to a challenge to the duel, which in the royal palace, far more in the royal presence, was a very serious offence. Acting on this pretext he sent Roxburgh and two more dukes to remonstrate with the Prince, who was ordered to consider himself under arrest, apparently, in the Princess's bedroom. Great was Mrs. Howard's astonishment "when going to the Princess's apartment the next

morning, the yeomen in the guard-chamber pointed their halberds at my breast, and told me I must not pass! I urged that it was my duty to attend the Princess. They said: 'No matter, I must not pass that way.'" The Prince acknowledged that he had used the words, though without intending a challenge or the slightest disrespect to his father, and the ducal messengers, in dudgeon at the scant ceremony with which he treated their august selves, made matters no better in their report to the King. The Prince wrote two explanatory and submissive letters in succession to his father, but His Majesty, "not finding them satisfactory, and having besides other reasons of discontent at several steps the Prince had taken," though he took off the arrest, sent Vice-Chamberlain Coke to him with a written message, in French, to bid him together with his wife leave the palace before nightfall, although the Princess, in consideration of her state of health, might stay till she was able to be moved without risk on condition that she did not see any one beyond necessary attendants. "But you are further charged to say to the Princess" (runs the message) "from me that it is my will that my grandson (the newly-born baby) and granddaughters stay at St. James's, and that the Princess shall have permission to come and see them when she wishes, and that the children shall have leave to go and see their parents from time to time,"[1] a promise which was not kept. George I had long ago learned how to apply torture through those natural feelings of which he himself was destitute, and now the turn of "cette diablesse Madame la Princesse" was come. The baby was literally torn from his mother's arms, and the three little princesses,

[1] Printed among the Eyre Papers in Philobiblon Society's "Miscellany," vol. ii. Also cf. Letters of Duchess of Orleans, Horace Walpole's "Reminiscences," quoting Mrs. Howard, and contemporary memoirs.

now respectively nine, seven, and five years old, were sent to bid farewell. It was more than Caroline, in her weak condition, could support. She sank into a swoon, from which she was with some difficulty recovered, only to fall into another and yet another. Her terrified ladies thought she was dying. It was no fault of the King's that she was not. But when she recovered the power of speech she steadily refused to be left behind in the palace; she would go with her husband; and she actually had herself carried to the nearest place of refuge, which was the house of the Prince's Chamberlain, Lord Grantham, not far from St. James's. Her husband was now all that was left to the unhappy Princess. It seemed that she was only to bear children to be bereft of them. Not one of the five was now left to her, and soon came the grievous news, hardly to be wondered at under the circumstances, that the poor little baby prince was ill. The King had ordered him and the three little girls to be removed to Kensington, quite out of their mother's reach for the time, and there the baby died (17th February, 1718) "of choking and coughing."[1] In the first agony of grief the poor mother wrote to her sympathising old cousin in Paris that she could not believe he would have died naturally. That such a cry should be wrung from one so prudent and sensible reveals something of the anguish she was suffering. The certificate still exists[2] of the *post mortem* on the little body, signed by four of the most eminent doctors of the day (Sloane, Meade, Hamilton, and a German). They certify that the child must have died in any case. But they were all official court physicians, and the medical science of that day does not inspire conviction.

Though the Princess was making a slow and difficult recovery, her little girls had not been allowed to come to see her, and their father was forbidden to approach

[1] Duchess of Orleans. [2] In the B.M. Stowe MS. 231.

them. The agitation had made him, too, ill, for it was a dreadful trial to him to lose his children, of whom he was very fond. What was still worse, Caroline had fears that they were being neglected. An outcry had somehow been stirred up against their trustworthy German governess: it was a slur on the English that she should have charge of the little princesses: and the King, on this one occasion not deaf to objections to something German, and although he had previously assured Caroline that he was perfectly satisfied with Baroness von Gemmingen, now summarily and roughly dismissed her. The poor lady betook herself to the Princess, who made her a bedchamber woman, and later "governess" to the little Duke of Cumberland; and she received a sufficient pension from the Prince until her death. But the wrong to the children was not so simply redressed. It cost Caroline many tears, and her tears did not come lightly. She could not learn that her daughters were properly cared for, and she knew nothing about the widowed Countess of Portland, whom George I had named their governess, and to whose control he left them entirely, except when he inspected them once a week. It was to be feared that the same melancholy effects might befall her little girls as, she soon had ground to suspect, were the fate of her son in Germany. On Fritz's superficial and conceited temperament his grandfather's training was producing no good effect, and he was given a jealous bias against his father and mother, who, it seems, were not allowed to know much about him. "As the Princess (writes the Duchess of Orleans to an intimate German friend) can get but little news of her eldest prince, I beg Monsieur Harling to write to me about him, and how he is, that I may give his poor mother that much comfort."

The Prince and Princess of Wales had been accompanied on their hasty exit from St. James's by most of

their servants, gentle and simple. Scarcely any seem to have thought of deserting them in order to curry favour with the King, although it was made clear that nobody would be able to avoid ranking himself definitely on the one side or the other. An order was issued that all who held employments under both King and Prince must resign one of them, and it was officially notified in the Gazette that any persons who went to visit the Prince and Princess would no longer be received at court. The guard of honour which usually attended them was withdrawn and orders were given that they should be treated as private persons and their royal rank ignored. Still more, formal instructions were sent to all the foreign ministers to transmit to their respective courts the royal, or official, account of the catastrophe, and the affair became public to the world when an enterprising Amsterdam newspaper got hold of the royal circular and published it, and this was in turn translated into English and published in the weekly "Critic."

So august a scandal was at once the prime topic of gossip in London, Paris, Berlin, and that focus of European news and diplomacy—the Hague. It is surely an odd comment on the anxiety for his own dignity with which George I is generally credited, that he should twice have excited European courtly society by his family scandals—first over his wife, and next over his son.

Endless stories were told by fashionable correspondents of the apprehensions of the courtiers, who were unwilling to quarrel either with their King or their future King, as, *e.g.*, how the Prince of Wales's secretary asked a man of fashion what the Czar, Peter the Great, over whom western Europe was then still full of excitement, had done to the secretary of his son, when the latter was disinherited: "He was sewed up in a football and tost over the water," was the gibing reply.[1]

[1] Pope to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

For the commonalty of England the story was produced in one of those disrespectful ballads,[1] frequently very accurate, of which the politics and scandal of the age were so prolific:

An excellent New Ballad to the tune of Chevy Chace.

God prosper long our noble King
His Turks and Germans all!
A woeful Christ'ning late there did
In James's House befal.

To name a Child with might and main
Newcastle took his way;
We all may rue the Child was born
Who Christened was that day.

His sturdy Sire, the Prince of Wales,
A Vow to God did make
That if he dared his Child to Name
His Heart full sore shou'd ake.

But on a Day streight to the Court
This Duke came with a Staff;
Oh how the Prince did stamp and stare,
At which this Duke did laugh.

Hereat the Prince did wax full wroth
Ev'n in his Father's Hall;
"I'll be reveng'd on thee," he said,
"Thou Rogue and eke Rascal."

The Duke ran straitway to the King,
Complaining of his Son:
And then the King sent three Dukes more
To know what he had done.

Then quoth the Prince, "he is a Rogue
Against my will to stand:"
Then Roxbro' said, "great Sir, indeed
He did it by command."

"By God thou liest, I know thy Heart
And thy Presumption too;"
And then he added words of Wroth,
So to the King they flew.

[1] Bentinck Papers in B.M. Egerton MS 1717.

"We saw the Prince," quoth Roxbro,—"*Bon*,"
"T' appease him we're not able;
He gave me, Sir, the Lie,"—"*Comment!*"
"And bid us go—"—"*Diable!*"

The King then took his gray Goose Quill
And dipt it o'er in Gall;
And by Master Vice-Chamberlain
He sent to him this Scrawl.

"Take hence your Self, and eke your Spouse
Your Maidens and your Men,
Your Trunks and all your Trumpery,
Except your Childeren."

. . . . .

Up leapt Lepell and frisk'd away
As if She ran on Wheels;
Miss Meadows made a woful Face,
Miss Howe [knocked off her heels.]

But Balladine I needs but praise
Who, as down stairs she jumps,
Sings, "*O'er the Hills and far away*,"
Despising doleful dumps.

. . . . .

Now Sire and Son had play'd their part
What could befal beside?
Why the poor Babe took this to Heart,
Kick'd up its Heels and dy'd.

God Grant this Land may Profit reap
From all this silly Pother,
And send these Fools may ne'er agree
'Till they are at Han——r.

In the meantime, at Berlin, the Queen of Prussia, daughter of George I, understood that her father was going to inform the English parliament of his reasons for disgracing his son, and would have them printed. He never did anything of the kind; never would specify any reason, even in answer to the Prince's anxious prayer to be allowed to know wherein he had offended, that he might show his contrition. "His conduct" had offended the King: no more definite accusation ever was made.

At Paris society was keenly interested. Gossip had it that the King of England was going to declare that the Prince was not his own son, and was then going to marry the Schulenburg. The Regent of France (the Duke of Orleans, son of the letter-writing Duchess) was afraid that the quarrel would injure the English King with his subjects, and affect his security on the throne. He was concerting a scheme of European policy—which hinged on his alliance with George I, and was so much concerned that he made an attempt to offer his services, as an ally and a relative, in mediation; but Bernstorff went to the French diplomatist, the Abbé Dubois, and very angrily warned him not to interfere. Nor was the French Regent singular in his anxiety; the Jacobites were alive with hope, and the astute English ambassador in Paris, Lord Stair, wrote warningly to Craggs, a member of the King's party, that he hoped "they would not all be crushed under the ruin of the whole building."[1] The Duke of Orleans confided to his mother that Bernstorff was a principal fomenter of this quarrel in her cousin's family, setting the King (he said) against his son as formerly he had helped to separate him from his wife, in order that no one might endanger his own influence, or inquire into his lucrative dealings in English offices and funds. "He ought to be ashamed," cried the indignant Duchess; "he, a German, to be falser than even an Englishman . . . he must be a perfect devil, and a wicked devil, too! he has an *interest* in it": and George I, "who would not for anything have it thought that anybody ruled him, how could he let himself be led by *that* Bernstorff, and quarrel with his own children?"[2]

There is no doubt that the whole circle of Germans rejoiced at the quarrel, the King's mistresses, in particular, being relieved by the absence from the court of the

[1] B.M. Stowe MS. 246.

[2] Briefe . . . an der Raugräfin Louise (7th July, 1718).

future queen, whose integrity and popularity made the one wing of St. James's so galling a contrast to the other. Plenty of spiteful tittle-tattle was whispered to the King about the Prince's family. The Duchess of Orleans considered it abominable that the King should so readily give credence to the mean persons who thus poisoned his mind, and who were now telling him that she herself wrote slanders of him to the Princess.[1] When such tales are brought against such persons as herself and the Princess of Wales some pains, she thinks, ought to be taken to investigate the truth. George I, however, never thought that necessary; he adopted such rumours as were useful, and found a new punishment for his daughter-in-law in the detail of her correspondence. Bothmer was told no longer to forward the letters of the Princess and the Duchess by the royal messengers, so that henceforth they would have to use the common post, which was not merely an indignity but meant that their letters would be opened and read by the official post office spies.

Caroline herself had told the Duchess that her husband had done his utmost to obtain grace from the King. He had written three utterly submissive letters, imploring forgiveness and owning himself to be in the wrong, "as humbly as he could have done to the Almighty Himself"; but he had not received any answer. She, too, had written with all the submissiveness she could, and had received, it is true, a reply, but a reply of angry reproaches. The King declared that the disgrace had been largely on account of "her bad conduct." She it was who had set the Prince against "Lord Newcastle."[2]

The Duchess of Orleans took this family quarrel quite

[1] Not, as Thackeray has it, that the Princess abused him to her relations.

[2] Duchess of Orleans to the Raugräfin 21st April, quoting Caroline herself.

to heart. The King's hardness, she declares, is more English than German, more like a Czar than a King. The little princesses "could never be in better hands than in hers, such a good mother, who sets example to her children in her own life." She could not imagine how the King could permit himself so to treat his son, unless he supposed him not really to be his own son (a stretch of imagination quite impossible, considering dates); and even then, "Since the King acknowledges him as his son he ought to treat him as his son, and not maltreat the Princess so harshly, who never in her life has done anything against the King, and has always honoured him like a dear father." She thought it looked as if the Prince had a share of his mother's bad luck, "and therefore cannot be loved, and that there is no help for." The King ought to end the affair, she says, for it only makes people rake up hateful old stories; and she concludes, prophetically, that it is likely that "the young Prince in Hanover may not meet with much love, for if the Prince of Wales has to bear his mother's sins, perhaps *he* may have to answer for his grandfather's." She would not be surprised, she adds, if the King's avarice were not one motive for his conduct.

Whether from avarice, or in order to add a practical embarrassment to his son's difficulties, the King did, indeed, attempt to mulct him of a large sum of money. When he ordered Lady Portland to take charge of his granddaughters as chief governess, he ordered her to arrange an entire establishment for them, for which he assigned the sum of £10,000 a year, and ordered the Prince of Wales to pay over the money. On this the Prince took courage to resist, and desired a legal opinion. He would not have submitted to the loss of his children could he legally have resisted. That question, however, had been laid before the judges by George I—in a manner grotesquely reminiscent of James I—after he found that Chan-

cellor Cowper would not sanction the detention of the children from their parents, unless after some flagrant misconduct on the part of the latter. The judges were more amenable than the Chancellor. Chief Justice Parker, who assembled them to consider the matter in January (1718), asserted, for himself, that "the law of God and the law of Nature are rather with the grandfather," and a majority of the other judges decided, with their chief, for His Majesty. Chancellor Cowper was compelled to resign, and Parker took his place; was created Earl of Macclesfield, and remained a favourite with the King ever after and to such a degree that, when he was convicted of malpractices as to money, and condemned to a heavy fine, George I began to pay the sum out of his own pocket.[1]

The order that the dispossessed father should pay the cost of the little princesses' household now raised a fresh point of law; and the Prince, after first trying, in vain, to soften the King's heart by yet another letter of apology, had recourse, on his own part, to the judges, and procured an opinion from them that he could not be compelled to pay for the support of the children who were taken away from him. George I was obliged to provide the money himself, and at once cut down the expenses.

It would be comical, were it not so disgraceful, to find that this provision for the three royal children was used as a means of satisfying a few greedy noblemen who were still clamorous. For the best post, that of Master of the Horse, a Scotchman was named (Lord Glenorchy, afterwards Earl of Breadalbane), with a staff of clerks; but the King considered that the young princesses need not have a stable "on a court regulation," although their Master of the Horse was to get a larger salary than Anne's had received when she was heir to the throne,

[1] *Cf.* Campbell's "Life of Lord Macclesfield."

so no coaches were bespoken for the stables, since no money remained to pay for them.[1]

Happily for the young princesses Lady Portland really did her best for them in the difficult position in which the King had placed her. She refused to raise any hopes among the noble and gentle sinecurists of obtaining more money than the King's grant allowed for, and flatly told Lord Glenorchy that he must not expect to be allowed to spend on himself the whole of the handsome allowance for the stables (with no coaches), "it must be saved out of" in order to provide for other *necessaries* for which nothing was assigned! If the money is to be paid by the Prince, she wisely observes, there will be plenty of people ready enough to find fault with any expense that can be saved, therefore "we must altogether resolve to consider the whole royal family in doing our duty." Lady Portland was clearly an honourable exception to the courtiers among whom she found herself. She was rewarded by the affection of her pupils.

The Prince, however, did not pay, and the King economized, characteristically enough, by taking the cooks back into his own kitchen, and directing Lady Portland to arrange to board the princesses, a plan which caused their mother fresh anxiety.

The letter which the Prince had sent his father on this occasion is not without dignity, and bears out the statement that, on paper, George's expressions were usually extremely suitable to the matter in hand. After respectfully repeating his submission to his father he remonstrates against the enforced separation from his children: "that no want of care, no failure or neglect in any part of their education can be imputed to the Princess I am confident your Majesty will do her the justice to confess."

[1] Lord Portland's letters in B.M., Egerton MSS., No. 1717. She was by birth a Temple, and married, first, a Berkeley, then the Dutch Earl of Portland.

But if the reason of the King's action be the nearness of the princesses to the throne: "I cannot but imagine that a proper education of my son would have been the first care and he not still be suffered to remain at so great a distance." The Prince next asked whether the setting up of a permanent establishment for his daughters was meant to intimate that his son Frederick was never to come to England, or that, if he did, the Prince must then pay for his establishment also: "If the detaining of my children from me is meant only as a punishment I confess it is of itself a very severe method of expressing your Majesty's resentment. . . . Pity the Princess and suffer her not to think that the children which she shall with labour and sorrow bring into the world, if the hand of heaven shall spare them, are immediately to be torn from her, and instead of comforts and blessings be made an occasion of grief and affliction to her."

The letter no doubt raised sympathy for the poor Prince and Princess among those who read it, but dignity and pathos were as much wasted on George I as remonstrance or submission.

Now that the handsome income of the Prince and Princess was officially decided to be really in their own control, they were able to establish themselves in a home and court of their own, which probably, were it not by the forlorn gap made by the absence of their children, would have been far pleasanter and happier than the greater dignity of St. James's. They took Leicester House in Leicester Fields (said to have been on the site of the present Empire Theatre of Varieties),[1] and this continued to be their town house for nearly ten years, until the death of George I. For a country home they took Richmond Lodge, a pleasant little house on the riverside near Kew in the midst of Richmond Gardens.

In 1719 George bought the Lodge, and transferred it

[1] Wroth, "London Pleasure Gardens."

a little later to Caroline for her own possession, a proceeding which, on the ground of Hervey's sneer, has been ascribed to George's avarice. The Prince, however, now had heavy expenses to meet, and had even run into debt, a course which he did not regard with his father's complacency and was far from habitually practising, while Caroline's income was less burdened. It was, in truth, for her pleasure that the Lodge at Richmond became and remained her private property. She loved its country beauty and was fond of improving and adorning it, and of gathering about her here small informal parties of intellectual men whose conversation, in the freedom of privacy, formed perhaps her principal enjoyment.

Both at Richmond and at Leicester House a regular habit of life was at once formed which continued on exactly the same lines for many years. George was a man of orderly and precise habits, with a devotion to punctuality and precedent which grew on him with middle age.

It was while the Prince and Princess were at Richmond, after six months had gone by without permission having once been given to the Prince to see his children, that the three little girls picked a basketful of cherries in the Kensington garden, and got some one to carry it to their father with the message that, though they could not get to him, "their heart and soul and thoughts were always with their dear Papa," and the poor father broke down and wept bitterly over the little present.[1]

Caroline was allowed to go once a week to see her daughters, and it appears to have been on one of these visits that an unpleasant little adventure happened to her. She went in the usual mode of conveyance, a sedan chair, picturesque but not noted for safety. As the Princess had now no guards or retinue, she went like any private lady,

[1] Duchess of Orleans to the Raugräfin Louise.

carried by common chairmen. On one occasion just as she neared the palace, one of her chairmen recognized her, and began to hurl at her a torrent of coarse abuse of all Germans, including the King, and spat at her. Passers by, however, came to the rescue and handed the man over to the constables, and as he soberly reiterated his abuse before the magistrates he was duly punished in prison.

The King took no notice of the Princess's visits to her children, except that, if by chance he happened to catch sight of her, he would turn sharp round to avoid having to look at her. His detestation of Caroline is puzzling, for she certainly gave him no excuse.[1] It can only be surmised that she was the exact opposite of those women on whom he did bestow favour, and that possibly what he resented was the wise influence which helped to prevent the Prince from indulging in any follies which might, in the eyes of the world, have permitted George I to find a handle against him.

No wonder that Caroline's letters to her sympathetic cousin in Paris were lengthy! The Duchess, with some amusement, put it on record that her shortest letters were five sheets, written on both sides, and sometimes she wrote thirty-five, even forty-three, pages. "It takes me all my time, you may imagine . . . writing must come easily to the Princess when she sends me twice a week such a letter" of twenty-five pages. However, the Duchess says she had got used to her handwriting, and had herself sent an epistle of forty-two pages, and she finds "that the difference between our letters is, that Her Highness writes with greater discernment than I, but I,

[1] There is no ground for Thackeray's supposition that she turned him and his German harem into ridicule. The "dreadful tongue" and "savage letters" might possibly be ascribed to the Duchess of Orleans, who expressly states that lies were told to the King on this head, and hints that he chose to believe them.

as I fancy, *spell* better and correcter than Her Highness."

The subjoined specimen, a complimentary note to the Duchess of Marlborough, is a rather favourable one in this respect:

"1716, August $\frac{29}{30}$. Hampton Court (Hamthancour). —"J'ay receu ma chere duchesse avec beaucoup de jois votre obligeante lettre, et suis ravie de voire que les aux on desja fait un sy bon comencement. Le Duc de S^{t} Albans écrit à la Duchesse que vous allé souvan à la comedy. Vous voules Madame savoir l'estat de ma santé qui et Dieu mercy tres bonne mais tres grosse et je vous paraiterais une boulle à votre retour que j'espere sera en parfaite santé, ce qui fera beaucoup de plaisir à celle qui vous aime tant que Caroline."

Addressed:—"Pour Madame la Duchesse de Moresbury a Bath."[1]

[1] *Hist. MSS. Commission*, Report on Papers of the Marquis of Bath, ii, 180, 181.

CHAPTER V

CAROLINE'S COURT AT LEICESTER HOUSE AND RICHMOND

THE King must have been disappointed to find that his banishment of the Prince and Princess of Wales had not altogether the result intended; their popularity, strange to say, appeared to be undiminished by their formal disgrace, though nothing could be got by serving them. His Majesty even went so far, in his effort to attract company to court, as to provide magnificent dramatic entertainments at Hampton Court, to which he invited all the polite world, but he could not make the world come. Some went out of town to the country: some stayed in town and would not journey so far. Even gay ladies who deplored the dullness of life when no court was kept in the capital would add that they had "no notion of serving two masters." There was more resort to Leicester House than to St. James's, for there was undoubtedly a strong feeling of sympathy with the Prince and Princess, and a considerable indignation against the King, and most of those who now testified their adherence to the fortunes of the Prince and Princess continued throughout their career connected with their court—Herveys, Lumleys, Bellendens, Claytons, Walpoles, and a host of Campbells, besides the august Hertfords and Dorsets.

As for Caroline's maids-of-honour, they were quite desolate away from her court. In the comparative

privacy of the little lodge at Richmond by the great park they hunted with the Prince of a morning—not always to their comfort—sang and jested and played pranks to their hearts' content. They had pet names for one another: Mrs. Howard was "the Swiss" (her suite at Hampton Court seems to have been termed the Swiss Cantons); Molly Lepell was "Tom," or "poor Tom," and her future husband, John Hervey, the "Schatz," probably Caroline's nickname for the witty and handsome young man, of whom she was becoming very fond. The maids-of-honour disliked having to go away for "a holiday." Giddy Miss Howe could hardly express her disgust when she had to spend a few weeks in the country with her parents. To fashionable people "the country" was then nothing but a place of dismal exile, they would have liked to spend the year round among the converse and gaieties of London. Miss Howe writes again and again to Mrs. Howard, as in some sort the *doyenne* of the young ladies, to beg her to desire the Master of the Horse to send one of the coaches to fetch her back. This Master of the Horse was Lord Lumley, afterwards Earl of Scarborough, all his life a staunch servant of Caroline and George. He really directed their stables, it seems, just as Grantham, their Chamberlain, was responsible for the etiquette of their court and the order and engagements of the Household.

"Next Wednesday," writes Miss Howe vehemently, "next Wednesday the coach must come, or I die. Pray send me word beforehand if he will obey my commands, for that will keep up my spirits while I stay.

"The good lady [her mother] put on her broad girdled gown and striped night clothes [*i.e.*, evening dress], to look decent upon the death of her mother: that frill is a bad omen for me, for she always comes out with something dreadful when she is adorned: She no sooner entered the room, with a face a thousand times more pale

than *you* ever had, but she comes out with the fatal sentence, 'that I might take this opportunity of staying here some time longer'—but hang me if I do!—and if the coach is not sent I will come away in the waggon, that I am resolved upon. No, no! I have profited better by her lesson than to fail so much in my duty to the Princess in being so long without waiting. . . . One thing I have got by the long time I have been here, which is the being more sensible than ever I was of my happiness in being maid of honour; I won't say 'God preserve me so' neither, that would not be so well. . . . I have told mamma that Lumley *must* send the coach a good while before the Birthday because the men must all be in town to have new liveries made; so let somebody write me a letter that 'he is very sorry it must be so but that it is absolutely necessary (I am sure, to my repose) to come next Thursday.' My service to all the he and she flirts at Richmond, and believe me very sincerely yours

"S. H."

Miss Howe was the only one of the Richmond court who scandalized society by a *faux pas*. She was, of course, obliged at once to leave the service of the Princess, and the amazement which her error excited in those lax times is a clear testimony to the high reputation of the Prince and Princess's circle. No less telling is the anxiety of those who themselves had served Caroline to introduce to her their relatives. Mary Bellenden, after she had left the court, wrote urgently to Mrs. Howard to further the suit of her niece, Bess Hawley. "I beg (she writes) you would let me know how she looked and behaved, and if she is likely to take with their royal highnesses. . . . Though the obligation comes immediately from the Duchess of Dorset you may be sure I reckon you the fountain and foundation of that poor girl's getting her bread; for without you I should

never have had the courage to have attempted it. I hope you will put her a little in the way of behaving before the Princess, such as not turning her back—and one thing runs mightily in my head, which is, crossing her arms, as I *did to the Prince*, and told him I was not cold, but I liked to stand so; and then some sort of warning as to Claton (I cannot spell her name) and gaming. . . . I intended to have written to my Long Leg and Short, but I have not time this post, but tell them I hear they were prodigious civil to my niece, which I take to myself and love them more than ever. . . . Adieu, my dear Swiss."

The gaming dreaded by Mrs. Campbell (as she was at the date of this letter, 1720,) took place over the cards which provided the usual amusement of the evening. There was *ombre*, a quiet game for three, four, or five players, and *picquet*, also more or less a game of skill; but *basset* was a game of chance and often led to mere gambling, while *pharaoh* had a still worse reputation. Though the Prince himself always played for low stakes, for which he was, of course, sneered at by fashionable rakes, high play might be found at other tables. Mrs. Clayton, who seems to be accused by Mary Bellenden of high play, was Caroline's other confidential bedchamber woman, and between her and Mrs. Howard subsisted a kind of feud. She is a somewhat enigmatical character. People often regarded her as having a great deal of influence over her mistress, who certainly reposed great trust in her, and it was declared by her enemies that she stooped to take gifts for recommending persons to Caroline for appointments. But all these assertions come from a band of opposition gossips—from Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who belonged to the King's "party," and was impertinent to the Princess; from Horace Walpole, who knew Sir Robert's dislike of Mrs. Clayton; and from the bitter-tongued old Duchess of Marlborough,

who now praises, now abuses, Caroline, according to her own frame of temper at the moment of writing. Shortly after his peerage had been granted to Lord Pomfret, the husband of one of Caroline's ladies, Mrs. Clayton attended the Duchess of Marlborough's reception wearing a magnificent pair of diamond ear-rings. Malicious tongues had already commented on their appearance at that particular time. "What an impudent creature," quoth old Sarah, "to come here with her bribe in her ear." "Pray, Madam," returns Lady Mary, "how should people know where wine is sold unless a bush is hung out?" It was witty, but it proves nothing. Mrs. Clayton was certainly of a very different type from the lovable Mrs. Howard and the fascinating maids and brilliant wits who loved her society. Chesterfield and Pulteney, Gay and Arbuthnot, Pope and Swift, belonged to her circle. Mrs. Clayton's set at Caroline's court included Lady Pomfret, dutiful and matter-of-fact, and Lady Cowper, but also the lively Hervey, who detested Chesterfield, disregarded Mrs. Howard, and was destined to quarrel bitterly with Pope and fight a duel with Pulteney. "Mrs. Clayton," says a divine who owed something to her patronage, "had the uncommon merit of letting those she wished well to not only see but feel it." Her principal *protégés* were among the Latitudinarian divines of the school of Dr. Samuel Clarke, and she was certainly often a disinterested means of obtaining the Princess's favour for men who, she thought, deserved it. This was what puzzled the folks of fashion, who could no more believe in her disinterestedness than they could conceive the possibility of Caroline's devotion to her husband having any other ground than a love of power. There was a foundation of seriousness in both Caroline and Mrs. Clayton which drew them together. The Princess felt from the first that she could rely on her bedchamberwoman, nor was she mistaken. From the time of the

quarrel with the King, when Caroline sent for Mrs. Clayton, then not in waiting, to come to her privately, until the day of her death, she confided her chief secrets to this reserved and discreet woman. Mrs. Clayton kept them faithfully. She wrote no diary, told no tales in her letters; her published correspondence is as dull as possible. Sir Robert Walpole's supposition (according to his son), that Mrs. Clayton "had power over" her mistress through the knowledge of a secret about her health which Caroline alone could have confided to her, is superfluous.

Caroline had a recognition for real goodness, and a respect for real honesty unknown to the Herveys and Chesterfields, and perhaps she may have found more solid satisfaction in the grave talk of Mrs. Clayton's philosophical friends than in the merriment of her young maids-of-honour, better suited to the Prince's more volatile temperament.

Not that the Princess did not enjoy being amused; but she liked wit pungent. She had begun by somewhat too unguarded a friendliness with vivacious Sarah Marlborough, who repaid her by sarcasms behind her back; she showed affection for the equally spirited and still older Duchess of Monmouth, with her true stories of strange past courts; and she afterwards came to delight in the flashing raillery of Hervey, equally skilful in his adroit flattery of the Queen and his maliciously dramatic descriptions of all that she would fain have seen and could not.

Surrounded by such society, quietly instructed as to politics by occasional visits from Townshend or Walpole, the Prince and Princess might with justice have made the subsequent boast of Pope, that their

> Retreat the best companions grace,
> Chiefs out of war, and statesmen out of place.

But those few who thought primarily of the public

security, Lord Cowper, or the Duke of Devonshire, or Archbishop Wake, felt very grave at the prospect of a royal quarrel which apparently might last for years, and which, by providing a second centre for politicians to gather round, might portend new and fiercer convulsions of party strife. The King's announcement of the official severance between the two courts was a calamity, as Archbishop King of Dublin wrote to Wake—the very way to make faction irreconcilable, since common friends were thereby compelled to declare themselves common enemies. Wake could do but little: for himself, he had the courage to write to the King and insist that, as the minister of religion, he should be permitted to visit the Princess whenever she should require his spiritual help.

The political strength of the Prince's position was that all those who expected things in the future, rather than in the present, naturally held to him. The ministers in office, and the Germans with whom they were making a common front, were, of course, uncompromising supporters of the King's obstinate attitude. But they had to reckon not only with the "outed" Whigs, whom they had themselves driven from office, but with a considerable body of Tories. These, as a party, were aware that they were hopelessly shelved so long as they were identified with the Jacobites. But their ranks included a number of clever, even of honest men, who could no longer seriously contemplate a Stuart restoration, and to whom this cleavage within the royal family appeared to offer a chance of one day climbing to power again. They, therefore, attached themselves to George and Caroline, happy, even if they were not to reach political office in the near future, in having once more satisfied the necessity (as it was to men of position) of being included within the charmed circle of fashionable life, attached in some sort to a court, its only possible centre.

But Townshend and Walpole and Pulteney could not

see unmoved the bustling of Tories about Leicester House. They themselves were playing a deeper game. And they were too astute to commit themselves to uncompromising opposition by openly courting the Prince. They waited for a chance of bridging the gulf between him and his father in such a fashion as to secure their own gradual return to power at the head of the united Whig party. Any compromise with Tories they rejected. Walpole, the leader of this section of the Whigs, was, therefore, careful not to ingratiate himself with the Prince so far as to rank definitely among his party, and Caroline, at this time, actually disliked him. His coarse language and his flagrant immorality, marked traits in many English politicians then, alike displeased her, and she had been told that he had even referred to herself in coarsely vulgar terms. But Walpole was not disconcerted. He was in no hurry, and felt himself able to win her friendship when he should want it.

It was in the first place necessary to sound the Prince, to see how far his cause and that of the ex-ministers could with advantage be amalgamated. The watchful ballad-mongers, who made the details of politics and scandal as public as our "special correspondents," hit off the visit of the "Seven Wise Men of—England" to the Prince with no courteous touch. They come by water to Richmond, and the spokesman, Townshend, explains that he has come to lend his head, and his brothers-in-law, Robert and Horace Walpole, their *faces*, for the Prince's service. His Highness listens, thanks them politely for their advice: "Let 's go and ask our Wife's."

Thus there was no preventing the society of Leicester House from assuming the appearance of an opposition court. The Prince and Princess might keep as much aloof from political topics as they liked, but they would not discourage the visits of the witty or the wealthy whose views and position made them aliens at St James's.

It was easy to reach Richmond by the usual waterway of Thames, it was nearer, too, to town than Hampton Court, and the Prince and Princess would have had a throng of company, but that the Lodge was a small house, hardly large enough for their ordinary household, so that the daily life of Caroline's little court, when established here, was very much that of a private family, and the susceptible Prince was dependent of an evening on the society of his wife and her ladies, and had no other opportunities for exercising the fashionable habit of flirtation, to which marriage, in that epoch, was by no means expected to interpose any bar.

He met, as has been mentioned already, only with rebuffs from Mary Bellenden, and it is said that he sought sympathy in his woful case from her friend Mrs. Howard. Now Mrs. Howard had for years been a member of his household and occupied in it a rather curious position. Caroline would treat her as an indulged servant, whom she could absolutely trust, but might occasionally snub, to prevent her from assuming too much dignity. Mrs. Howard lived apart from her miserable husband; the Princess, in fact, was the poor lady's protectress against his stupid brutality. It was as Caroline's dresser, or bedchamber woman, that Henrietta Howard came back to England from Hanover, her husband being a Groom of the Bedchamber to George I. The salary was of the first importance to the impecunious couple, for though Mr. Howard was brother to the Earl of Suffolk he had long since run through all his own money and his wife's too.

It was in those times regarded as a laughable thing for a man of fashion to be content with his own wife, and the Prince of Wales, though never, in truth, in love with anybody but Caroline, and always proud of her devotion to him, would have felt ashamed of his own simplicity had he not followed the prevalent custom.

Mrs. Howard's beauty, charm, and good sense made her a favourite with a host of distinguished persons, from the martial Peterborough and the artistic Lord Burlington, the arbiter of taste, to the petted poet Gay: she was fit enough therefore to provide the entertainment of George himself, who, for that matter, had very good taste about women, as about music.

That she became his mistress was at the time veiled; the polite world of London assumed it, and neither thought nor spoke any the worse of her in consequence; some of her friends assumed the opposite. In any case Caroline viewed the position with perfect composure. The more the Prince frequented the company of Mrs. Howard, the higher was her favour with the Princess. George, to be sure, was a heavy person to have to entertain, and his evening talks with Mrs. Howard left his wife a little free time to devote to her own pursuits, to the books, letters, and conversation with intelligent people, all of which her husband detested. And she may well have felt relieved when he fixed his preference, not on the fearless, impulsive Mary Bellenden, but on "my good Howard," who was so discreet and modest, so averse from political intrigue, and whose gentle temper Caroline knew herself perfectly able to control.

The unfriendly King, however, was keeping a close watch on his son's court, and now ordered Mr. Howard, his own servant, to go and raise a scandal by demanding his wife. If he succeeded in carrying her away from Caroline's protection the Princess would be mortified, if not, a reprehensible motive could be openly assigned. Mr. Howard, accordingly, wrote to bid his wife relinquish her post at once, but he explained that it was by the King's orders he did so, and hinted that he would waive his demand if his wife would make a settlement of her own property on himself. When Henrietta, upon legal advice, refused to do this, the man tried to pose

as a plaintive and injured husband, and betook himself to the Archbishop of Canterbury, as the public guardian of morality. The Archbishop was shrewd enough to see through his pretences, and realize that the attack was really aimed at the Princess, whom he advised to give in, for her own sake, and let Mrs. Howard go. But Caroline had far too much spirit for this; Mrs. Howard regarded herself as safe from her wretched husband's violence only in the Princess's court, and Caroline never let a fear of what slander might say turn her from any course of action. Mrs. Howard remained at Leicester House, and the King's Bedchamber gentleman came and clamoured outside the gate before a derisive crowd in vain. His character was too well known for any one to pay much attention to his complaints, and his real object may be guessed by the promptitude with which his outcries ceased as soon as George I died. He then readily accepted the "compensation" of an annual sum of money paid to him by his wife, and definitely separated from her in return.

No doubt the noise created by the affair of Mr. and Mrs. Howard did have, to some degree, the effect which George I desired. It was hinted that Caroline's action arose from a base complacency to her husband, to whose pleasures she was willing thus to minister. But the straightforward story of the events is quite clear, and Henrietta Howard had throughout the sympathy and active support of such honourable men as Dr. Arbuthnot and John Gay, as well as the warm affection of the best women in the court and in the town.

Mrs. Howard is well known to us from the eulogies of her friends. Swift corresponded with her, Gay, on his way to toady royalty with meagre verses, and the famous Mr. Pope from Twickenham, on the opposite side of the river, were her visitors. She was the amiable and beloved hostess at many a meeting of wits and beauties, who

loved to gather in her rooms. They wrote her charming letters in prose or verse, and, with the single exception of Dean Swift, they remained her friends through life. She was the gallant and eccentric Peterborough's:

> Chloe, so lively, so easy, so fair,
> Her wit so genteel, without art, without care,
> . . . . . .
> O wonderful creature! a woman of reason!
> Never grave out of pride, never gay out of season;
> When so easy to guess who this angel should be
> Would one think Mrs. Howard ne'er dreamt it was she?

She was Pope's

> Thing that 's most uncommon . . .
> . . . a reasonable Woman.
> Handsome and witty, yet a friend . . .
> . . . . . .
> Has she no faults then (Envy says) Sir?
> Yes, she has one I must aver;
> When all the World conspires to praise her
> The Woman's deaf, and does not hear.

Mrs. Howard was really slightly deaf. Pope was quite the laureate of the merry young ladies, to whom he addressed the delightful "Challenge" to "one fair lady out of Court and two fair ladies in," *i.e.*, Misses Lepell and Bellenden, asking them to come to tea (apparently) with himself and Gay at a well-known cake shop rather than expect him to come to court. He knows indeed, many of their little secrets,

> Couches and crippled chairs I know
> And garrets hung with green,
> I know the swing of sinful hack
> Where many damsels cry Alack!

but he cannot make his way at Leicester House as a good courtier should do:

> Alas! like Schutz I cannot pun
> Like Grafton court the Germans;
> Tell Pickenbourg how slim she 's grown,
> Like Meadows run to sermons.

"What is *Prudery*?" Miss Howe once asked, possibly in flippant reply to some hint of reproof. Pope made a neat answer for her after her own heart:

> 'Tis a Beldam
> Seen with Wit and Beauty seldom.
> 'Tis a fear that starts at shadows
> 'Tis (—no 'tisn't!) like Miss Meadows.
> . . . .
> 'Tis an ugly, envious shrew
> That rails at dear Lepell and You.

Not that wit and merriment were always the order of the day. One can believe that the situation of a court favourite was no easy one. Mrs. Howard was supported by Caroline exactly because she was without that influence over George which many of her friends imagined she must have. People would often suppose that it was well to apply through her to the Princess or the Prince, a course which, in the latter case at all events, invariably led to disappointment. She was treated, sometimes, with embarrassing confidence. What, for instance, was she to do when the arrogant Duchess of Buckingham, with whom, in 1723, Caroline began some negotiations about a lease of Buckingham House, desired her to let the Princess know that, after all, she did not want to let it to her? "Considering the little care and regularity that is taken in the Prince's family, did his Highness give as much again as he might now have it for it is possible one might repent it at the expiration of the lease." The Duchess was supposed to be an illegitimate daughter of James II, and gave herself rather more airs than would have befitted a lawful one. Her furniture and pictures, she added, "run hazard of being spoiled, and, to be sure, will be all to be new bought whenever my son is of age." The charges against the Prince's household are almost certainly gratuitous.

What, again, could Mrs. Howard reply to suppliants

so unreasonable as Gay or Swift? They persisted in assuming that, if only she would, she could "do something" for Gay. He and Swift were, each in his characteristic way, possessed to a lunatic degree by the conviction that their overwhelming talents gave them a claim upon government. Swift perhaps seldom appears to worse advantage than in his deliberate worrying of Caroline and her Bedchamber woman.

Once, with a letter in a lordly style only fitted to some despotic but ill-bred emperor, he sent to Mrs. Howard a specimen of Dublin silk, or poplin, carefully informing her of its price, and asked her to present it to the Princess, and secure her patronage for the industry. Caroline was always ready to help the deserving, and felt a kindly interest in the unhappy population of Ireland. She obligingly ordered a large quantity of the material, saying that she and her children would all wear dresses of it. Mrs. Howard was to send the money, and, in the meantime, conveyed to him the order for the silk in a deftly complimentary letter (November, 1726), meant to intimate that both she and the Princess had already read and been delighted by "Gulliver's Travels," which had appeared the month before. All the acknowledgment she got from the great man was a profession of being deeply insulted by the Princess's intention of paying for the silk he had sent as a present, and a series of arrant rudenesses, ostensibly intended as jests. He successfully repudiated the money, and, after Caroline became queen, wrote brutal attacks on both Mrs. Howard and her mistress, on the nominal ground that although he had condescended to visit Caroline, after being *nine* times begged to do so, she, though so much in his debt, had never sent to him a certain medal he had requested, and which she promised to have made expressly for him. The real ground, no doubt, was that Walpole and the Whigs still were maintained in office.

So long, however, as George and Caroline were still but Prince and Princess they were spared by the opposition wits, who concentrated their venom upon the government, which was the joint enemy, and Mrs. Howard's trials, as a supposed avenue to royal favour, whom every greedy sycophant thought he had a right to pester, did not become acute until George II mounted the throne. Again and again she was then insulted by barefaced offers of bribes, a double insult, placing her in the odious light which had hitherto been monopolized by George I's German mistresses. And the pious diatribes of such poets as Gay and the sententious Dr. Edward Young, of the "Night Thoughts," against the wickedness of courts is, unhappily, principally to be ascribed to their inability to extract gold from the fist of George II by insinuating silver into the hand of Mrs. Howard.

The Household of the Prince and Princess of Wales, in 1719, was composed of:

(1) "Officers who are of our Council:—Chancellor, Sir Robert Eyre, K^t.; Master of our Horse, Richard Lord Lumley; Treasurer, The R^t. Honble. Spencer Compton Esq.; Principal Secretary, Samuel Molyneux Esq.; Auditor General and Surveyor General, Samuel Travers Esq.; Attorney General, Spencer Cowper Esq.; Sollicitor general, Laurence Carter Esq." Their total salaries amounted to £3,387 15*s.* 6*d.* Five "officers and servants attending on our Council" drew £196 17*s.* 6*d.*

(2) "Officers and Servants belonging to Our Bed-Chamber:—8 Gentlemen of Our Bed-Chamber—Henry, Lord Herbert, Carr Lord Hervey, John Lord Belhaven, Philip Dormer Lord Stanhope, Henry Earl of De Lorraine, Edward Viscount Sondes, William Earl of Essex, Thomas Lord Pagett," each received £600 per annum; Seven Grooms of the Bed-Chamber received each £400, viz.: Thos. Pagett, John Campbell, Chas. Cathcart, John Montgomery, Chas. Churchill, John Selwyn and

Langham Booth, Esquires, and so did the Master of the Prince's Robes, Augustus Schutz. There were 5 Pages of the Backstairs: John Purcell Esq. (who was also Yeoman of the Robes, at £40, with £10 for riding expenses and £20 for his servant), and Messrs. Theodore Brinkman, Chr. Lochman, Joachim L. Sollicoffer, and Absolam Evans: they received £80 per annum; 2 barbers (Brinkman and Lochman, Germans) had in addition £60; the servant to the Pages, £20; the seamstress and laundress, Mrs. Margaret Purcell, got £150 and an allowance for extraordinaries of £50, and the Necessary Woman £30, besides £6 for lodging money, £6 for brooms and "mopps," and £4 for charcoal.

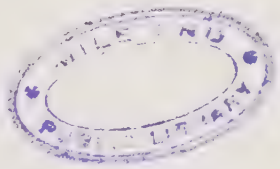
(3) The "Officers and Servants above Stairs" ranged from the "Clerk of the Closett, M^r. John Harris, Master of Arts and Dean of Burrieu," at £200, to the 18 watermen at 3 guineas apiece, and comprised besides 2 gentlemen ushers, Henry Bellenden and Edward Rich, Esquires, each receiving £150, 4 gentlemen waiters at £100, I. Didier, J. Steuart, R. Douglas, and Glook, Esquires, a page of the Presence at £40 and the master of the barges, £30.

(4) The stables were well staffed. Under Lord Lumley were 4 equerries, each at £300, 2 pages, Panton and Courthope Clayton, each at £150. A German "Master of Our Doggs and Guns" (£179 14*s*. 11*d*.) and a gentleman Yeoman, a clerk, 2 purveyors, one chaiseman, 7 coachmen, 7 postillions, 7 helpers, 5 grooms, 12 footmen, 4 chairmen, the farrier, and the bottle-man. Only 8 among them all seem to have been Germans. The salaries and wages totalled £3,675 6*s*. 11*d*.

(5) The staff "below stairs under our Treasurer" was headed by 4 gentlemen each paid £500 a year: Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Bt., Geo. Evelyn, Esq., Rob. Pitt, Esq., and Sir Thomas Read, Kt., and the Clerk of the Kitchen was a gentleman, Hy. Powell, Esq. But it mainly

onsisted of the needful servants; yeomen and grooms of the pantry, cellar and scullery-master, yeomen, and groom cooks, roasters (3), turnbrooches, and turnspit boys; laundress and other under servants, besides 3 "table-coverers," or footmen, for the Bedchamber Woman, Maids of Honour, and Gentlemen Ushers, to serve their meals. The total sum of these wages and salaries was £3,533 11*s.* 8*d.*

The prince paid pensions of £500 each to the Countess of Bückeburg and to Baroness von Gemmingen, and disbursed for the Princess's separate Household £10,184. His establishment cost him altogether £31,893 14*s.* 3*d.*



CHAPTER VI

THE KING'S PERSECUTION

SO far as George I could himself do it he had deposed his son from the position of heir apparent. But as this could be but temporary, he proceeded to invoke the aid of Parliament to hamper the Prince more heavily. It had been made clear, by the opinions delivered by the judges, that the King could not compel his son to pay money on account of the children taken away from him. The King therefore desired his ministers to procure an Act of Parliament for depriving him of his separate income. The £100,000 was to be paid to the King, and he would assign to the Prince such a proportion as he considered sufficient for his lessened household. Sunderland and Stanhope acquiesced, and the bill and the ministerial speech to introduce it had already been drawn up before the draft was submitted for the criticism of Lord Chancellor Cowper, just before his exit from office. His sound sense anticipated the clamour which would certainly ensue, with Walpole and Townshend free lances in the two Houses, and he represented to the King that the outcry and the awkward questions which would certainly be pressed about the education of Prince Frederick in Hanover would be exceedingly difficult to meet. The plan had to be relinquished. But Cowper's resignation of the Great Seal soon after deprived the Prince of his strongest friend.

The King's next move, in 1719, was directed towards

lowering his son's future status as king. He consulted his ministers on a plan for depriving the Prince, whenever he should mount the throne, of the inheritance of Hanover. It would be a blow which the Prince would feel keenly, for he loved his German home as strongly as did George I, though the latter never suffered him to visit it. He said that he did so love old Brentford because it reminded him so of Germany. George I astutely supposed that the English dislike of Hanover would be so much gratified by the separation that it would be impossible for his son's friends to resist the new law proposed, namely, that any future King of England must relinquish his German dominions before his coronation.[1] The Electorate might then be conferred upon a younger son "or a collateral," *i.e.*, the King's favourite brother, Ernest, Bishop of Osnabrück and Duke of York. Promising as the plan appeared at first sight, and glad enough as all the English ministers would have been to be rid of Hanover, George I was foiled again by the scruples of the law. His new Chancellor, Parker (Earl of Macclesfield), pointed out that the English Parliament could not regulate the succession to Hanover, and suggested that he would have to apply to the Emperor in the case. Even should the Emperor gratify the King it would be doubtful, as to English action in the question, whether the addition of a sort of "rider" to the Act of Settlement, under which the royal family held the throne, was feasible. The next sovereign would be entitled to mount the throne in virtue of that Act, and could at once get the proposed new law repealed; and if that happened England might find herself at odds with the German claimant in possession.

The idea, therefore, of penalizing the Prince of Wales in this way was dropped. But his persistent father, in consultation with his advisers, thought out a more

[1] See B.M., Stowe MS. 248, and Campbell's "Life of Lord Chancellor Macclesfield."

crafty scheme which, appealing to several selfish interests, did actually reach the stage of a parliamentary Bill, passed the House of Lords, which it appeared chiefly to concern, and was only destroyed in the House of Commons by the skill of Walpole. This, the famous Peerage Bill (1719-20), was drawn up by Stanhope and Sunderland, quite as much to satisfy the King as to secure for themselves, as they believed, that desideratum of the party politicians of those times, a perpetual tenure of office.

The bill provided that no more than six new peerages were ever to be created, except on the natural extinction of one, and that the Scottish peers, instead of being elective, should become hereditary, George I naming the fortunate nobles. He was to nominate twenty-five, a larger number than sat by the Act of Union, in order to give Stanhope a sufficient majority in the House. The six new peers would also be created by George I, to whom great credit was to be given for so great an anxiety to "preserve the independence of Parliament" that he was heroically willing to curtail the royal prerogative with that object.

In this way the Prince would be rendered powerless to reward in the future, in the manner most coveted, any of his present adherents, who might, therefore, be expected to desert him in discomfiture, or any of his future ministers, who would have the less inducement to serve him, while to achieve this aim and the temporary triumph of the ministers the constitution must be radically altered by the erection of an all-powerful House of Lords, unamenable to royal creations. The Peers, perceiving the enormous weight which would attach to them when a close body, passed the bill with alacrity, in spite of the warning voice of Lord Cowper, and the Duke of Argyll proved the justice of the royal forecast by deserting the interests of the Prince of Wales, and seconding the motion to bring

in the Bill. His reward was instant. He was reinstated at court and created Duke of Greenwich (where his English mansion stood) and Steward of the King's Household.

The real point at issue was recognized by everybody, and made clear by the usual ballad: Sunderland is represented as wondering why anybody should find fault with

> . . . so clever
> A stroke to keep Whiggism in the House ever,
> Which already had made Whigs of Harcourt and Trevor,
> Which nobody can deny.
>
> He told them, "You know the King has a son
> Who, should he succeed, we are surely undone,
> But the Game had been ours had we made thirty-one." [1]
> Which nobody can deny.
>
> Then Stanhope with eloquent fury bespoke
> The audience and told them, "The Union 's a joke—"
> And cared not, by God, how soon it was broke.
> Which nobody can deny.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Then God bless the King and may he long live,
> Who loves not, 'tis true, his money to give,
> He cares not a fig for his pre-ro-ga-tive,
> Which nobody can deny!

It had been expected that the Whigs who formed the principal part of the House of Commons would feel bound to support their leaders and demonstrate the genuineness of their democratic superiority to titles. But fortunately there was left one statesman with influence sufficient to secure attention, and arguments trenchant enough to hearten the secret demurrers to make an open resistance. Robert Walpole tore to shreds the flimsy pretence of "constitutional reform," and "securing the independence of Parliament." In scornful allusion to Stanhope's recent earldom he wondered at the "Gentle-

[1] *I.e.*, peers, twenty-five Scotch representatives and six new creations.

man who, having got there himself, is now desirous to shut the door after him," and by exposing the constitutional peril and social injustice of the bill, procured its rejection in the teeth of the government.

The Prince of Wales would, then, succeed, in due course, to all his father's dominions and all the royal prerogatives which the Revolution Settlement had spared, and it was clear that the Houses of Parliament were not to be cajoled into wreaking the King's private spite.

But the hatred of George I was not mollified by his successive failures. The last dark suggestion which was made was buried in a silence so complete that it was discovered only by accident, and buried again so discreetly that its exact provenance cannot be ascertained. But that there was at least one minister, and apparently there were three, ready to further the monarch's will by nefarious means, seems certain. By imitating the methods so ably pursued on the smaller stage of Hanover, earlier in the life of George I, it might be that the Prince could be kidnapped, carried off, and shut up. He could not in England be openly imprisoned, as his mother had been, for the law still secured there the ordinary rights of free men even to members of the royal family, but there were dominions under the power of the Crown where the royal will was less disputed, whether in Germany or, possibly, in the vast territories of the American colonies, to which political prisoners had often, and recently, been deported as white slaves.

The suggestion was recorded in a compromising paper found, it is said, by Caroline herself, when, but newly crowned, she was searching through some papers of George I. This paper was in the handwriting of Charles Stanhope, Under-Secretary of State, the distant relative and favoured *protégé* of Earl Stanhope. It contained a vehement attack upon the Prince of Wales, and con-

cluded: "he must be seized, and Lord Berkeley will take him on board ship and convey him to any part of the world that your Majesty shall direct."[1] James, third Earl Berkeley, was a trusted favourite of George I. He was made First Lord of the Admiralty in April, 1717, and held the office until George I's death, and he was also a Vice-Admiral of the Kingdom. In 1718 he was given a remarkable warrant to enable him to hoist his flag as Lord High Admiral, that is, he combined the two supreme posts, a unique incident in our naval annals, so that his conduct of naval affairs, on shore or at sea, could be scrutinized by none save the sovereign. In the spring of 1719, when there was a possibility of war with Spain, Berkeley was cruising in command of the Channel fleet. The King had shown his favour by making him a K.G., and bestowing on him an accumulation of honourable and lucrative appointments, and he was one of the Lords Justices in every regency commission issued during the reign. His family held some proprietary rights in the American colony of Carolina. When George II came to the throne Berkeley lost all his appointments, and betook himself to his property in France, where he remained until his death in 1736. There is nothing in Berkeley's career to discredit the story, nor in Horace Walpole's pious ejaculation that "George I was too just" to contemplate such a thing. George I had contemplated exactly that very method of ridding himself of the Czar of Russia in 1718. The idea which to modern critics seems absurd was, after all, only just out of date, or rather, perhaps, out of scale, according to the records of the Hanoverian family. Those who were near the heart of things political

[1] "Il faut l'enlever et my lord Berkeley le prendra sur un vaisseau et le conduira en aucune partie du monde que votre majesté ordonnera" (Hervey, iii, p. 282). Horace Walpole had got the story from Sir Robert, to whom Caroline confided it ("Works," iv, p. 289), but he had slightly confused it, as to the handwriting.

declared that Earl Stanhope and Lord Sunderland were so much afraid of the Prince and "so inveterate against him that nobody doubted that they would deprive him of the crown if they could."

It was small wonder, then, if men of insight, like Cowper and Stair, doubted of the security of the new dynasty, or that the Duchess of Orleans should heartily wish that the ministers who wronged the Prince and Princess might "make a little visit to the whales and sea-wonders" when they next returned with their sovereign from Hanover. For the King had no hesitation in leaving the kingdom, in spite of the threatened Hispano-Scottish rising, so soon as he could exclude the Prince from the regency, which he did by leaving a body of "Lords Justices" to exercise the royal functions of government, much to the chagrin of the Prince of Wales. George I was anxious to see the costly improvements at Herrenhausen, which had been industriously carried out, upon English funds, during his absence from the Electorate. He directed that while he was abroad, his granddaughters' residence at Kensington should be royally guarded as when he was present, and that they should hold drawing-rooms twice a week, that they might already begin to occupy the place in society which of right was their mother's. To the children, therefore, solemnly resorted the nobility and the foreign ambassadors on the occasion of the King's birthday, to pay their formal congratulations, while their parents betook themselves to Richmond Lodge to avoid the open display of indignity. The rueful Duchess of Orleans's only tiny consolation was that, though the Hanover citizens and peasants greeted their Elector effusively, she heard he had as thin a court around him as in London, and had to drink his waters at Pyrmont almost alone.

The sole concession his absence procured to his unfortunate son was a grudging permission to visit his

daughters at last, but only in the presence of Lady Portland. Yet when in December the King returned he chid Lady Portland for having let the Prince come so often, and when the latter, hoping to soften him, sent a letter of submission and greeting, the King forbade the nobleman who brought it to come into his presence, and revoked the permission he had given for the Prince to visit the little princesses, "a heart's grief to him."

The clouds seemed thick indeed.

CHAPTER VII

THE RECONCILIATION AND THE SOUTH SEA

THE year 1719 had gone by dismally for the Prince and Princess, though during the King's six months' absence in Hanover Walpole proved his ascendancy in the House of Commons by procuring its rejection of the Peerage Bill. After the King's return Caroline could only visit her children once a week, but at least she had not lost her hold on their affection, nor did Lady Portland influence them harmfully. She, indeed, won their confidence, and kept it to the end of her long life. The year 1720 opened with no prospects of relief. The King had discovered the understanding between his son and Townshend and Walpole, and showed his irritation by forbidding the two latter to appear in his presence, or even to visit the Newmarket races when he himself was there, a prohibition which probably inflicted a serious penance on both of them. Yet the only person who was able to distinguish a gleam of light on this stormy horizon was Mr. Walpole. That cheerful, confident man perceived a financial storm brewing in the City, which sooner or later must so seriously baffle the King's inexperienced ministers, that he might be able to ride into port on its wings, and his terms would embrace a closing of the breach which was so dangerously dividing the royal family and the Whig party. Certainly no one else saw so clearly the nature of the catastrophe in which the wonderful South Sea Company mania was bound to end,

though even he could not have predicted the delirium of 1720.

Robert Walpole was the one member of "the Prince's party" whom the King was disposed to forgive, for he was already sorely missed in the department of finance, the one department with which Stanhope's vigorous genius could not cope. In spite of the King's liberal civil list of £700,000 yearly and several special votes of money for foreign policy, nearly all of which went into German and Swedish pockets, the King and his ministers between them had succeeded in piling up a debt of nearly £600,000 in three years. Parliament would be startled at the request to find the money, and might ask awkward questions about the German pensions or the secret service money. Walpole, the financial oracle of the House of Commons, must not be left free to oppose and defeat the ministerial demands, so Stanhope, finding the Commons growing unmanageable, and possibly conscious of failing strength, was willing to acquiesce in a renewed partnership.

Probably both he and the King were not uninfluenced by the recent Jacobite plots, and the uncertainty how far foreign powers were abetting them; it would be only wise to recapture the adherence of the man who was the favourite minister of the all-important City of London.

Walpole seized the opportunity of making a kind of bargain. The King must be reconciled with his son, and the latter must be prepared to give in to his father on certain points. Walpole had by this time discovered Caroline's influence over her husband, and opened his scheme first to her, for it was no easy thing to bring the Prince to write a renewal of his former apologies and to give up the claims of certain of his supporters to places which could not, or would not, be found for them by the King's ministers. But Walpole had recently secured the friendship of both George and Caroline by giving them

excellent advice in a piece of business. The South Sea Company was running its wild career, and Walpole, though he had spoken in the House against the absurdly speculative bargain the Government had driven with the directors, was sagacious enough to buy and sell its shares himself, as a private speculator, and he put the Prince and Princess in the way of doing the same. They had sold out according to his advice, reaped a large profit, and were disposed to listen attentively to all his advice.

What Caroline demanded was the restoration of her children. Walpole, however, would have no such stipulation. They must first get the King into a good humour, he said, and then trust to obtaining what they wanted by degrees. Caroline, in terror lest her daughters should still be kept from her, unconvinced by the Bishop of Norwich, who went on his knees to take an oath to Walpole and Townshend that she should really have them back, wept at the vague terms which her husband was talked into accepting, and cried out that she was betrayed. "She cried and said: 'I see how these things go; I must be the sufferer at last, and have no power to help myself. I can say, since the hour I was born, I have not lived a day without suffering.'"[1] There was probably a good deal of truth in Walpole's plea that he was not in a position to make definite terms with the King, who was inexorable when ruffled. And he was, of course, bent more upon his own restoration to office than on that of the Prince to favour. They must seem to submit, he said, and let him work underhand for them. "Mr. Walpole," replied Caroline, "this will be no jesting matter to me; you will hear of me and my complaints every day and hour, and in every place, if I have not my children again."

The great financier, however, felt pretty confident of his own power to bring the King to such action as he

[1] Lady Cowper.

chose. He said that he did everything in that august quarter by means of the influence of the Duchess of Kendal, who "was in effect as much Queen of England as ever any was," though, he added, "her intellects were contemptible," and she would have "sold the King's honour for a shilling advance to the highest bidder." Walpole's plan was simply to find out her price and pay it so amply as to make her feel that her interest lay in his ascendancy. The rest of the German circle were kept in the dark, but among the English members of the royal court Walpole had an ally in the Duke of Devonshire, a personage whose wealth and influence compelled some attention; George I always had a curious confidence in dukes. So at length, by playing off different alarms on both the Prince and the King, Walpole manipulated each into thinking himself triumphant. The King did not want his inconvenient son and daughter-in-law back in St. James's; the Prince was very anxious not to have to leave his own home in Leicester Fields for the palace; so each was allowed to suppose he gained a victory over the other by the Prince remaining at Leicester House.

Apparently even Caroline did not know how far Walpole's stealthy negotiations had already gone when she was driven almost to desperation by the news that the Princess Anne was ill with symptoms which threatened smallpox. The poor mother sent at once to the King, praying for leave to go to the child, which he only granted with the stipulation that she must carry neither doctor nor physic with her, for he had himself appointed a physician. The children were now removed into that wing of St. James's commonly called the Prince of Wales's, and here Caroline spent nearly the whole day with them. Infection, of course, received very little attention then, so she used to stay with her sick child from 11 in the morning till 3 o'clock; then she was

escorted by her ladies in waiting back to Leicester House to dine and receive company, after which she would return to the sick room at 6 o'clock and stay till 11 at night—bed-time.

Three days after Anne's illness was declared to be smallpox for certain, the Prince's submissive letter, first inspected and approved by the ministers, was carried to the King, who returned a message. The Prince instantly took his chair, went to St. James's, and had a private interview with His Majesty. Apparently he made a suitable apology, to which, he said, the King replied by some muttered words of which he could only distinguish: "Votre conduite, votre conduite!" Then, at last he was allowed to go and see his daughters, first the healthy ones, then Anne, who was prepared for the excitement by Lady Portland, steadfast at her post in spite of its danger. The Prince's summons to court had been so sudden that Caroline, having been with Anne all the morning, could not be told of it, and as she was on her way home in the afternoon she was startled by meeting her husband in his chair, and instantly supposed he had received a summons to the sick bed. She stopped to ask: "I hope you have no ill news of Anne?" "No," said he, "I am going to wait on my father."

Great was her relief to welcome him back later when he appeared once more in semi-state, with the Beefeaters escorting his chair as a mark of restored royal dignity, and a crowd about him all shouting for joy. "He looked grave, and his eyes were red and swelled as one has seen him upon other occasions when he is mightily ruffled."

The King put off seeing Caroline till next day, and when he did receive her it was with no good grace. He came to the little Princesses' apartments, and in a room next to the sick room, where Caroline was, as usual, spending the evening, he gave her a private interview

of over an hour. From this meeting Caroline returned to her husband and her ladies transported at His Majesty's "mighty kind" reception, and told the doctors and everybody how "mighty kind" he had been to her. But Walpole's account was that the King had chid her in a cruel way. "She could have made the Prince better if she would," he declared, and he insisted that he should expect her to do so henceforward.

It is impossible to discover what George I can have had to complain of in his son, unless that he had some personal preferences for certain servants and friends of his own. Doubtless it was rather a general and intense dislike of everything the Prince said or did than any explicit reason which caused him to launch forth vague accusations of "bad conduct," and rate Caroline for not "making him better."

The reconciliation of the King with his heir apparent was made public officially, as the breach had been. On the day after, the "outed" politicians, Devonshire and Walpole, Cowper and Townshend, Pulteney and Methuen, went to court to kiss His Majesty's hand, and then, it being St. George's Day, a state procession was made to the royal chapel to hold a thanksgiving, King and Prince each at the head of his train of officials, who "kissed, embraced, and congratulated one another upon this auspicious reconciliation." The only persons who did not evince their pleasure were the German ministers, from whom the negotiations had been carefully kept secret, till Stanhope, who took as much credit to himself as possible for the happy event, scored an ill-natured triumph over his rivals, Bothmer and Bernstorff, by informing them of the reconciliation in deliberately insulting language. The latter was so much taken aback by the discovery that the King had acted without him that he actually burst into tears, aware that his ascendancy was over.

As much public rejoicing took place over the royal

reconciliation as if a victory had been won over a dangerous foe. Bells were rung, salvos fired, and healths drunk in whole barrels of beer. Congratulations by loyal addresses or formal letters were proffered to the principal persons about the court, and the Duchess of Orleans sent hers to young Prince Frederick as the head of the family on the Continent. All over the country there was feasting. One of Mrs. Howard's correspondents tells her how, down in Dorset, the joy of the loyal squire quite alarmed the neighbourhood, for he drew up his troops (being a captain of militia) and made them fire a volley of shot to every health, while he and his friends drank to the entire royal family, flinging the glasses over their heads when they had done. After this the gentry went to a bowl of punch and the men to a barrel of ale; but they "thought themselves not glad enough, and he, to make them so, went amongst them and gave them money to finish in wine." It is a typical picture.

The first Drawing-room after the great event was crowded, for not only was there great curiosity to note how the principal personages would conduct themselves, but very little court had been paid to the King of late, in consequence of the general disgust at his behaviour, and now the absentees flocked back. Unluckily the Prince's following came in all together behind him, while the King's court was all gathered at the top of the room behind the King, and the Prince's group remained together without mingling with the others, "which made the whole Thing look like two Armies drawn up in Battle Array . . . the Prince looked down and behaved prodigious well; the King cast an angry Look that way every now and then; and one could not help thinking 'twas like a little Dog and a Cat—whenever the Dog stirs a Foot the Cat sets up her back and is ready to fly at him."[1]

[1] Lady Cowper.

The peace was but a hollow one, though the Prince fancied himself triumphant and bragged in his self-laudatory way of his fidelity to his friends and its good success. He was never left Regent again or permitted the slightest political importance. Caroline's apprehensions were justified; the young Princesses were not allowed to leave St. James's, and Lady Portland continued to be their governess, while the Princess, though she might visit them as often as she chose, was made to feel that she, at all events, was still in disgrace. She used to make a point of going to the drawing-rooms and speaking to the King, to prove to the public that no quarrel existed; but it was an unpleasant task, and all her tact was required to assert her rightful place without provoking undignified friction. On the grand occasion of the King's Birthday (28th May), for instance, the Grand Chamberlain, the Duke of Newcastle, "had got drunk for our sins, so the Princess's ladies had no Places, but stood in the Heat and Crowd all night." When the Duchess of Shrewsbury complained, this competent Chamberlain replied to her that he had indeed provided places, but did not *keep* them, and as the "Ladies of the Town" had come and taken them he could not turn *them* out for the Princess's ladies![1] These "Town ladies" were the wives of the City financiers, "our new Lords and Masters of the South Sea, who had much more court paid to them than the ministers themselves." For peace had been declared in the royal family just at the flood tide of the South Sea Company's popularity in April, 1720.

As has been already said, one of Walpole's methods of securing favour at Leicester House had been to procure a large quantity of the Company's stock for the Prince and Princess of Wales, shares to the value of £20,000 for the former, and to the value of £10,000 for

[1] Lady Cowper.

the latter; so much being demanded for them that some Members of Parliament had to go without. Nobody could be surprised, for the court, the clergy, the astute London merchants, the Parliament, and the whole nation were just then insane with the fever of speculation. Three years earlier, when the Company was in the early days of its fame, the Prince of Wales had been requested to become a Director. With commendable propriety he had then declined both the position and the salary, saying that he "would do them all the good he could" unofficially. But since that time the Company had expanded to gigantic proportions; the King himself, in 1719, had accepted privately a large sum of money from the Directors, and had had a special Act of Parliament passed to enable him to become a Governor, with a couple of deputies to sit at the Board meetings in his stead. The Prince of Wales could not see why he alone should be debarred from sharing in the fashionable speculations wherein the King and his mistresses, the ministers and the whole court were already reaping fabulous fortunes. He would no longer attend to Walpole and his safe methods of legitimate purchase and sale, but wanted to have a share in some of the other speculative companies which were now shooting up, mushroom-like, in such numbers that, as a contemporary put it, "they seemed to be rather the result of an epidemical distemper than of choice." About a score of them applied for the complete apparatus of incorporation by patent, but some one hundred and forty other schemes were advertised in London which never aimed so high, and these were classed, even by those who dealt in them, as "Bubbles." All the world flew to purchase shares, confident of selling again at fabulous profit. Many of the "Bubbles" had, ostensibly at least, a sober purpose enough. Some proposed to promote local industries, which in ordinary times proved feasible and profitable, such as the com-

panies for supplying Liverpool with fresh water, for making Manchester stuffs (London had lately witnessed riots of its textile workers against the new fashion of wearing calicoes), for paving the London streets, which were still a byword for dirt and danger, or for working Cornish tin mines. Several were Insurance schemes—among them one for insuring masters against losses by servants. But what could be expected from companies for making deal boards out of sawdust, or importing timber from Wales, or making flying engines? The Bubble favoured by the Prince of Wales was a Welsh Copper Company, in which he became a director with a large number of shares. Walpole and Spencer Compton, George's Treasurer, remonstrated in vain. They warned him that "The Prince of Wales's Bubble" would be hawked about in Change Alley, that he would get himself reviled in Parliament; that he might even find himself liable to prosecution. But His Royal Highness was obstinate, and when the shares—whether on account of his patronage or not—rose from £4 to £96 he sensibly sold out, with a profit, as was said, of £40,000. Then the Copper Company was pounced upon for prosecution by the government, noways loth to embarrass the Prince, at the instance of the South Sea Company, who wanted to clear away these "Bubble" companies, which stirred its jealousy. But the King had gone abroad in June, and the Lords Justices, who had been appointed as a Commission to exercise the Regency, took care to send the Prince of Wales private warning in time for him to resign his directorship and escape public scandal.

As is well known, the South Sea Company's prosecution of its rivals brought about the end of the mania. Bubble after Bubble burst and the inflated credit of the South Sea suddenly sank, leaving a host of ruined speculators, furious against the directors who had, as they cried,

duped them; and the more frantic for the spectacle of the lucky people who had sold out in time and reaped wealth. "Many a man of reputation and distinction was undone [*e.g.*, the Duke of Portland] and obliged to walk on foot; while others, who the year before could scarcely purchase a dinner, were exalted in their coaches and fine equipages, and possessed enormous estates; and such a scene of misery appeared among traders that it was almost become unfashionable not to be a bankrupt."[1] Suicides occurred in unheard-of numbers; commercial ruin spread to all the trading towns of England, and beyond it; the looms of Manchester stood idle, and the Ulster Irish, who used to find in that town a market for all the yarn Londonderry could export, were starving because their entire produce was refused. This "flagitious and execrable scheme of the South Sea Company for paying off the debts of the nation," wrote the London chronicler solemnly, was "the greatest and most fatal catastrophe that ever befel this city, except those of its entire destruction by the Britains and Danes."[1]

What made the catastrophe a political danger was the fact that Parliament, led by ministers who had been heavily bribed, had, in spite of Walpole's warnings, merged the National Debt in the South Sea Company, so that the holders of that Debt, long considered to be one of the chief pledges of the Whig party and bound up with the Hanoverian Succession, found themselves likely to be ruined; and the certainty that the ministers and the King's German favourites (not to mention the King himself) had made fortunes during the progress of the mania, or had pocketed huge bribes, naturally embittered the savage outcry raised against all the promoters. It was fortunate indeed for the Prince that he had not been left Regent at this time of stress. The King's absence appeared to the Londoners to make things worse, and the meeting of

[1] "Survey of London."

Parliament on his return was anxiously looked for, though impartial persons doubted "whether it was not past the power of King and Parliament together to cure the fright that has seized everybody." The German coterie were terrified nearly out of their wits by the abuse hurled at the King and at certain of themselves —the women in particular. They assured George I that he had better execute a sham resignation, to bring the people to a sense of their dependence on him. That was what Ernest Augustus used to threaten his courtiers with in old days. With the Jacobites jubilant over the birth of Charles Edward Stewart, however, the advice hardly seems appropriate. Letter after letter went from the English ministers to urge the King to return. The quarrel in the royal family had only been made up just in time to hearten the Whigs to unanimous effort, for the ministry suddenly collapsed. The royal quarrel and reconciliation had produced "an inundation of pensions" which already embarrassed heavily the finance of the ministry, and threatened to ruin it, when, on the meeting of Parliament, in December, some of the principal ministers were openly accused of corruption. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Aislabie, was expelled from the House and sent to the Tower; the Secretary to the Treasury, Charles Stanhope, only escaped by three votes, and with his fame deeply tarnished; the elder Craggs committed suicide rather than face the inquiry; his son, James Craggs, who had had, at least, a hand in the bribery of the German peeresses, died of an attack of smallpox before the inquiry was concluded. Sunderland himself was unable to meet the storm and resigned, to die a year later; while Lord Stanhope, whom nobody could suspect of malpractices, agitated more than his health could support by a furious attack in the House of Lords, expired from the effects. The stage was swept clear for Townshend and Walpole.

It is to be feared that the year 1720, with its lessons in duplicity and speculation, was no ennobling one for Caroline. Perhaps a certain coarsening of her mental fibre, which becomes almost painfully evident in her later years, may have begun in this season of intrigue when Walpole first taught her his methods of "working underhand," and enforced his precepts by pouring gold into her lap. Not that she ever loved money for itself, but it meant power, and power Caroline coveted.

Walpole himself was mounting on the tide of success. The next year saw him First Lord and head of the ministry. The King placed now in him the confidence he had reposed on Stanhope, and, secure in power, the minister made no further efforts on behalf of the Prince and Princess of Wales. He did not work against them, but he was satisfied that they should remain in the private obscurity to which they had been relegated after the nominal "reconciliation." They were not dangerous to his ascendancy there. The children were never restored; their parents could see them, but as years went on it was rather Lady Portland than their parents from whom they took their tone, and from their father they remained, as they had become already, half estranged.

Caroline felt less resentment towards Walpole than did her husband. She was astute enough to understand the minister's point of view and fair enough to appreciate it. She was watching, too, his success in the work of government, and the confidence she already felt in him as a financier deepened into a conviction that he identified his own security with that of the reigning House and its actual Head. The story that George I himself, talking over politics with the Princess during chapel, convinced her of Walpole's gift for "converting stones into money," is probably, save for the talking in chapel, apocryphal. In any case Caroline had acquainted herself with his abilities without the assistance of George I.

The year 1720 was one of changes, too, in the Princess's immediate circle. The grave-minded Lady Cowper, who was no friend to Walpole, and whose intimacy with Bernstorff might perhaps render her mistress suspicious, was practically dismissed, ungrateful to Lord Cowper as such treatment was. But what offended Lady Cowper was less the actual dismissal than the subterfuges which preceded it. Caroline, who really owed something to the loyalty of the honest Lord Chancellor's wife, had intimated that she intended to bestow upon her the much-desired Gold Key of Mistress of the Robes. But more influential peeresses laid claim to the post, nor, perhaps, dared the Princess venture upon offending all of these—with some of whom Lady Cowper was at daggers drawn—as well as the King, with whom the ex-Chancellor was in no good odour. Whether or not she had ever really meant the honour for Lady Cowper, she made a great mistake in not dealing with her straightforwardly; instead, she alternately professed and excused, with an undignified duplicity, imagining herself to be acting with masterly finesse while her indignant victim saw through the pretence all the time. This was a poor sort of cleverness which Caroline lowered herself by practising more and more as years went on, complacently supposing it a sort of kingcraft.

More lamentably missed at Leicester House than the accomplished but rather prim Lady Cowper were those charming maids of honour, Mary Bellenden and Molly Lepell. The lively beauties, so often coupled in compliment and song, had announced their marriages at the time of the royal reconciliation. They had been not only betrothed but actually wedded in secret; the first, to Colonel John Campbell; the other, to John Hervey, second son, and now heir, of the Earl of Bristol; and both were carried away from court by their husbands—Mrs. Campbell to a happy country home in Kent, Molly

(soon to be Lady) Hervey to the less happy grandeur of Ickworth, the fine Norfolk seat of her husband's charming old father and eccentric, exacting mother. Thence she wrote of herself, eight years later, to her faithful friend, Mrs. Howard, as "a fatigued nurse, a grieved sister, and a melancholy wife"—her husband was then travelling abroad, nor was she much favoured with his company, it would seem. She was driven to find her best solace in books, spending the mornings, she says, "as much like those at Hampton Court as I can, for I divide them between walking and the people of the best sense of their time; but the difference is, my present companions are dead and the others were quite alive." She looks back fondly to the happy days of Caroline's court, in the little country mansion at Richmond, and asks whether her friends "meet in the same cheerful manner to sup as formerly. Are ballads or epigrams the consequences of those meetings? Is good sense in the morning and wit in the evening the subject, or rather the foundation, of the conversation? . . . but, in short, do not you want *poor Tom* [herself] and *Bella-dine* as much as I want *Swiss* (in the first place) and them?" The pathetic letter gives a very different picture of the little court circle from Pope's bit of polished satire. Molly Lepell was ever staunch in her devotion "to who were once and whom I always consider as my master and mistress," and in years to come she sent her sons to serve them.

Mary Bellenden was happier, so happy that two years after her marriage she was condoling with Mrs. Howard on her melancholy position, still in court service. She even looked back on the gay old days with some disapproval, as it seems, in her matronly mind: "it would make one half mad to think of misspent time in us both." She hopes that on some opera-day Mrs. Howard will venture over to Croombank to see her, "and stay one night and be in town by the time the Princess is dressed

if you set out between nine and ten next morning. I would have it when my John comes because he would be mightily pleased (besides its making me happy) in seeing you here. . . . Pray, do you not think it was a little comical to set up old Peter [Campbell, M.P.] where there could be no opposition and let my John take his chance? [*i.e.*, in the parliamentary elections]." Her delightful letter to the same friend about her country home is well known from Thackeray's quotation.[1] Such pictures are not at all common in the epistles of that age.

A third wedding was that of the Duke of Argyll, who had, before this, carried off his oddly-chosen flame, Jenny Warburton, from among the Princess's maids, but in her case there was no such gap created in the little court, where the whole affair raised considerable mirth. The Duke's separated wife died in January, 1717, and it was understood that he was likely to lose little time in marrying again, but that a man of his magnificent station, eager, too, for lucre, would seriously propose to the plain and penniless daughter of a Cheshire squire was hardly imaginable. Everyone gossiped of the chances of the different heiresses and the melancholy figure poor Mrs. Warburton would cut. Caroline, always considerate, felt sorry for the ordeal poor Jenny's composure must face at the first drawing-room after the Duchess's death, and sent Mrs. Howard to tell her that the Princess excused her from attendance for that day, and until the tattle had subsided. Mrs. Howard promptly carried the kind message, only to find the phlegmatic Warburton quite puzzled—"'Not wait to-day! why must not I wait? What's the matter? Is the Princess angry with me? Have I done anything?' 'Done! bless us, no! My dear Mrs. Warburton, it is her Royal Highness's kind consideration for you. She concludes you cannot like to wait, she is afraid of your being distressed.' 'Dear, I always like

[1] See "The Four Georges," or "Suffolk Letters," i, p. 104.

waiting exceedingly, and I a'n't in distress; who told her I was?'"[1] Miss Warburton was, in truth, so little concerned by the attentions of the Duke that she even took him to task for his impropriety in proposing so soon, when, falsifying the predictions of all the gossips, he actually hurried to lay himself and his splendid fortunes at her feet: as romantic a love-match, at all events on the part of the hero, as could well be found in fiction.

Certainly a more sombre tone became prevalent at Leicester House and Richmond Lodge after the departure of the young brides, for though their husbands retained their posts in the Prince's household, and Hervey indeed spent most of his time there, the wives returned no more save for occasional visits at the drawing-room, and with them vanished some of the clever friends whose vivacity had helped to mask the dullness of the monotonous regularity of the Prince of Wales's court. That monotony became established during the seven years of patient obscurity inflicted by the King on his son, for he was permitted no duties, and scarcely any publicity.

The only exception was on the birth of the longed-for prince, on 15th April, 1721. Caroline could order matters as she chose in her own home, for the baby was born at Leicester House, and this time George I consented to acquiesce in his son's arrangements, and the King and Queen of Prussia and the Duke of York were the sponsors of little Prince William Augustus. It was the one auspicious event in a peculiarly tumultuous year, for the Jacobite party were planning an insurrection; the Londoners, still savage over the South Sea, had got a Lord Mayor of the name of Stewart, and were roaring for "High Church and Stewart." Irish troops were brought over, and a camp formed in Hyde Park—much to the comfort of evening passengers, who felt

[1] "Memoir of John, Duke of Argyll," by Lady Louisa Stuart.

that the soldiers "made the road so safe." At last, most certain sign of trouble, the King himself was forced to take notice of the gloomy state of affairs, and to put off his usual journey to Hanover. Yet the only share of activity permitted to the Prince of Wales was to accompany his father to a review. It is small wonder that he gave in to the prolonged repression, became dull and ill-tempered, fussy and censorious. It was inevitable that, in the stagnation to which he was relegated, his natural fondness for work and carefulness over details should become fixed upon trifles, and now that public sympathy was no longer caught by his wrongs, and he was debarred from attracting it in any other manner, he slid into much the same position in popular estimation as that accorded to his father. He was considered as a dull German, who, if he could not be sneered at for hideous old mistresses or hated for rapacity or ill-nature, might very properly be derided for his deference to his own wife, for his plain spoken contempt for "bainting and boetry," or for his German accent and interest in things continental.

But this quiet unpopularity (so to speak) did not touch the Princess. There was nothing ludicrous about her. The newspapers testify to the persistence with which the populace—and not only in London—remembered to keep her birthday. General anxiety was evinced for her health at the birth of her two youngest children, the princesses Mary and Louisa, and on certain other occasions, and joy was clearly shown on her recovery.

These children and the constant companionship of her husband must have absorbed a large part of her energies, while in the memoirs of the literary men of the time there is evidence that she found a good deal of solace, amid the enforced stagnation of her life, in the converse of men of intellect and the study of their works. But as her studies in this kind were of no interest to the gossip-

mongers, we read little of the intellectual society she loved to gather round her save from an occasional sneer vented, in later years, by some satirist, that Caroline was not really a profound student in philosophy or theology—as if she could have the opportunity of becoming so! But she was genuinely interested in letters, though naturally, as a stranger to our language, it was rather the matter than the style of the books which attracted her. She took more interest in Halley or Newton than in Pope, though she and the Prince subscribed the sum of £100 to his "Iliad," which she praised in her private correspondence enthusiastically, expressing a hope that he would next translate the "Odyssey." But Pope could never see why accepting people's money should restrain him to politeness—or even to veracity—afterwards. The works she studied for her own satisfaction were principally the rationalistic speculations of Dr. Samuel Clarke, or Whiston or Woollaston. Caroline instinctively rose above party, whether in literature or the other departments of life. She loved a man of intellect, and she loved him to be honest and courageous. Whiston, when he fell into poverty, she quietly pensioned. Clarke she wished to see a bishop, and, when she became Queen, urged acceptance upon him. He was Rector of St. James's, and when Caroline was in town "seldom a week passed in which she did not" have him to talk to her,[1] or peruse some dissertation of his, unprejudiced by the fact that he had carried on a considerable controversy with Leibniz upon "Liberty and Necessity," all of which Caroline had read. Sir Isaac Newton had also engaged in controversy with the veteran philosopher of Hanover, yet Caroline could group the two together in her fine saying, that the greatest glory of the Hanoverian King of England was to possess two such subjects as Leibniz and Newton.

[1] Hoadly's "Life of Dr. Clarke."

From politics she kept at present aloof, too wise to lend herself or her husband to the intrigues of those who hoped to make capital out of the ill-feeling in the royal family. The falseness of political manœuvres she had not yet come to tolerate with the complacence of her later years. She could not forgive the French wife of Bolingbroke for assuring her that he had really entered the Pretender's service only in order "to serve the Court of London and earn his pardon." "That," said Caroline, afterwards, relating her interview with the Frenchwoman, "was to *betray* him: for though she softened the word she did not soften the thing, which was a speech that had so much villany and impudence mixed in it that I could never bear him nor her from that hour."

Outside the sphere of politics and letters society owed greatly to her example the rapid introduction of inoculation for smallpox. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had found out the practice of this in the East during her visit to Constantinople, and urged it upon her friends by example and argument. Caroline, who had experienced that fell disease herself, and had just known the anxiety of it for her daughter Anne, was deeply interested. The medical faculty were desired to investigate, and in 1721 four doctors went to watch Lady Mary's little girl inoculated—they were sceptical, but a host of friends, grasping at any chance of mitigating the scourge which ravaged so many homes, besought her to operate upon their children. The King allowed five criminals to receive pardon on condition of submitting to the operation, and the results of these early experiments satisfied Caroline, as they did most of the better educated classes. The new practice was still condemned by many of the doctors, hooted at by the mob, and preached against in the pulpit, where one divine explained that smallpox was evidently the plague inflicted upon Job by the devil, and to inocu-

late with it was to prove oneself his disciple. But the Princess had her two daughters Emily and Caroline inoculated with perfect success, as well as Prince Frederick in Hanover, and her adoption of the new practice ensured its rapid success.

CHAPTER VIII

QUEEN OF ENGLAND

WHEN in June, 1727, the unexpected news of the decease of George I reached England, it is not to be supposed that any distress was felt, except by the ministerial colleagues of Sir Robert Walpole. George I's unpopularity is forgotten now, and he has somehow managed to obtain a general vague approbation as a constitutional, peaceable monarch who left England to be ruled by English statesmen, and interfered with no man's liberties. Yet historians have pointed out that his often belauded foreign policy involved Great Britain, for the glorification of Hanover, in the most serious risks, though the worst of them were avoided, partly by luck, in nowise by the wisdom of the Kng and his favourite ministers. His support of Sir Robert Walpole was not won by that minister's patriotism, but by his alacrity in filling German pockets. And in the sole department of English governance with which he cared to concern himself—the financial—George I discovered methods of avoiding constitutional checks which made staid observers ask what was the use of voting a Civil List at all. Notwithstanding the special sums authorized by Parliament to be spent in support of the royal policy abroad, George I twice in ten years announced that his debts on the Civil List amounted to

[1] Cf. Lecky, "History of England in the Eighteenth Century," and Ward, "England and Hanover."

between £500,000 and £600,000, and twice this great deficit was wiped out by a complaisant parliament in the form of a loan, the King's characteristic plan for recouping it being to dock all the pensions, salaries, and wages of his officials. But still worse was devised; it was under George I that the Irish debt mounted rapidly from a very small to a very large total, and that the system of quartering on the Irish revenue pensions which no English minister would dare to own to became a scandal. His shameless conduct as to the South Sea Company, and the manner in which his mistresses were bribed, has been already touched upon. Avarice is an unkingly sin usually imputed to George II, but according to contemporary evidence it was the father who was the miser. George II was through life as careful over the accounts as in the other departments of business. But he was a punctual paymaster, a just and sometimes (as will be seen later) a generous giver. He at one time in his career amassed a great sum by carefully saving, for he neither squandered nor gambled, upon which count the fashionables dubbed him avaricious. But George II expended the greater part of this hoard in a time of national stress, the Seven Years' war, upon what was in reality the public service. And in so far as the Civil List was unduly burdened in his reign, the fault lies at the door of his ministers.

But the stories of George I's avarice are precise. He robbed his own family when possible; it was said that he had suppressed two wills in order himself to seize on the legacies made to his son. When his mother, the Electress Sophia, died, years elapsed before he could be induced to disgorge her modest bequest to her niece and companion the Raugravine Louise. The malicious Duchess of Orleans rejoiced in a tale Lord Peterborough related (among others) of his petty avarice. A lady who had played cards with him was eighteen "francs" in his

debt, and next morning sends him a number of bottles of wine. King George I bids the footman who brings them: "Tell your mistress to give you eight francs for me and then she will only owe me ten."[1] But perhaps the meanest of his expedients was to "borrow" the little annual grant of £15,000 a year made by Parliament for the relief of the French Protestant refugees. When he died the pensions of these poor people had been "in arrear" for years. Solicitous to the degree of suspicion about himself and his reputation, he took care to have all private papers destroyed which might cast an ill light on his more dubious proceedings, and hurt the Duchess of Orleans by demanding that she should burn the Electress's letters (which, unhappily, she did). But he had no consideration for the feelings of others. Bernstorff was dropped after spending almost a lifetime in his service and Cowper and Lady Cowper, like Argyll, were disgraced after the most flattering professions, and in spite of having rendered great services to the king.

His unpopularity among the better, as well as the commoner, classes of society was due not only to the injustice of the quarrel he had forced upon his son, to his cynical exhibition of coarse immorality, and the protection his example and connivance afforded to a band of cormorants; he also had talent for annoying people by acts of petty tyranny, or, what was as bad, permitting such annoyances at the hands of his immediate servants. It was his reputed daughter, Lady Walsingham, who laid a trap for her "friend," beautiful Mrs. Pendarves, in the royal garden at Windsor, to betray her into the arms of the King's secretary, Fabrice; it was by the royal order that the venerable Sir Christopher Wren was summarily turned out of a post he had occupied with brilliance and esteem under four kings to make way for a dishonest bungler who had bribed

[1] "Correspondance de . . . Duchesse d'Orleans" (Jaegli, 1880).

some of the Germans: it was with his personal approval that Walpole vented his spite against the old Duchess of Marlborough by suddenly forbidding her to exercise her privilege of driving to Marlborough House through St. James's Park, although the only other approach was through the narrow and malodorous passage of Pall Mall.[1] The Duchess was old and ill; other peeresses were still allowed the privilege, and she wrote to the Princess of Wales (in 1726) to beg her to get permission for her from the King himself to come through the Park, that she might be spared the jolting over the stones of Pall Mall. "She wrote to me in half an hour (says the Duchess) with a great deal of goodness, and would not send me a refusal till she had tried several times." The King must have found some satisfaction in humiliating Caroline and the Duchess of Marlborough by one stroke of ill-nature.

The news of the old King's death took three days to come from Osnabrück to England. The Prince and Princess were, as usual in the summer, at Richmond. Sir Robert Walpole, well aware of George's animosity but confident of overcoming it, was determined to be himself the bearer of the tidings to the new sovereign, who had, by this time, accumulated quite a large heap of grievances against him. He took horse at once and galloped from Chelsea to Richmond, like the hard-riding fox-hunter he was, with scarce a pause. He foundered a couple of horses, but he reached Richmond with his news on the afternoon of Wednesday, 14th June. The Prince used always to go to his chamber after dinner for a nap, and when Sir Robert arrived he

[1] What with the building of sheds, "setting out benches, and drays coming to carry things into the cellars it is sometimes difficult for chairs to pass it, besides they let stalls for herbs and stinking things that is a nuisance in the passage to her house." Letter of Lady Di Spencer in Colville's "Duchess Sarah," p. 305.

was asleep, the Princess sitting by him. Under these circumstances the minister was desired to wait, but he managed at last to persuade the Duchess of Dorset to steal up to the royal bedroom to see if his Highness were awake, and followed her so closely, that when she cautiously opened the door, he pressed in past her and knelt down by the bed, saying: "I am come to acquaint your Majesty with the death of your father." Whether or not the startled Prince, only half awake, really uttered the exclamation "Dat is one big lie!" he was speedily wide awake enough to attend to the minister's information with all propriety, and with perfect self-possession quietly told him to go to Sir Spencer Compton, who would inform him of the measures to be adopted.[1]

The new King and Queen betook themselves at once to town to Leicester House to receive the homage and congratulations of the nobility, and the square was instantly filled with a shouting crowd. Next morning Mrs. Howard, when she went to Caroline's room, beheld hanging up in the Queen's dressing-room a full-length portrait, and in the bedchamber a half-length, of the new King's mother, Sophia Dorothea. He had kept them concealed during his father's life, and thus endeavoured to vindicate his unhappy mother's memory at the first moment of being a free agent.[2] Next to the new sovereigns Compton was to be felicitated. He had long been the Treasurer of George's household, and as the second

[1] See a slightly different account in C. de Saussure, "A Foreign View of England."

[2] Unnecessary doubt has been cast on this quotation of Horace Walpole from Lady Suffolk, because she described the full-length portrait as of "a lady in royal robes." But by *royal* she obviously signified the state robes of Electoral Princess; and as Horace himself vouches for the half-length ("Reminiscences"), the story is particularly precise. Either all or none of his quotations from Lady Suffolk must be accepted. The method of arbitrarily adopting some and rejecting others, on preconceived notions of probability, is unfair.

son of the Earl of Nottingham, and Speaker of the House of Commons, was a personage of high position. He was the figure-head of the section of the Whig party which resented Walpole's supremacy. Walpole and his colleagues had not, however, yet received their formal dismission from office, and within four days Caroline had contrived to bring her husband to a decision totally opposite to his original intention, and to induce him to continue in office the very ministry he had hitherto been vituperating.

In this signal achievement she was aided by Walpole's dexterity and Compton's stupidity, to which qualities she skilfully drew her husband's attention. Compton, "fitter for a clerk to a minister than a minister to a Prince," was nonplussed when he was expected to act out of his routine. He did not know how to draw the new King's Speech, and innocently offered "his protection" to Sir Robert Walpole if he would get him out of the difficulty. Next, George II was dissatisfied with a paragraph, and Compton asked Walpole to go and explain it to him, and thus the great minister, whose bluff exterior and rude style of speech veiled a dexterity and insight recognized by Caroline already, obtained his opportunity to intimate to the new sovereigns that he was ready to serve them with the same completeness that had characterized his service of George I, and that he could procure a larger grant for the royal Civil List than his rivals either could or would extract from Parliament without him. This was undeniably a strong argument, especially to the King, and it was evident to Caroline that in no other hands would the security of the Hanoverian succession in England, the matter nearest to her heart, be equally certain. By whatever arguments, she convinced George II completely of the merits of Walpole, nor did either King or Queen ever regret their decision.

The discovery of this rapid change in the royal disposition dawned on the political world, most appropriately, at Caroline's first drawing-room as Queen. There was, of course, an extraordinary throng, and Lady Walpole, contrary to her former experiences, found that nobody took any notice of her. "She might have thought herself invisible to the crowd (her son relates) but for the unprecedented difficulty of thrusting herself between their backs and elbows." Nor could she approach nearer to the Queen than the third or fourth row; but no sooner was she descried by her Majesty than the Queen cried aloud: "There, I am sure, I see a friend!" The astonished company understood the hint, a lane opened on the instant, "And as I came away," said Lady Walpole, "I might have walked over their heads if I had pleased."

George II was accustomed to treat his own decisions, once taken, as irrevocable, and so it was on this occasion. When he found that the settlement of the Civil List was in question, he took the minister by the hand, and bid him "Consider, Sir Robert, what makes me easy in this matter will prove for your ease too; it is for my life it is to be fixed, and it is for your life."

Walpole had suggested a much larger increase for the King's annual Civil List; but this he was finally unable to secure. In the end he obtained £800,000, out of which the Queen was to receive £50,000, while her jointure, should she survive the King, was to be £100,000. Afterwards he found occasionally, it is believed, means of providing her with small extra sums of money from government funds. It would be absurd to suppose that Caroline was simply bought over by Walpole; his promise of ample funds, a promise which she knew him to be able to keep, was one, undoubtedly, of the considerations which moved her; but she must have thought out the problem before the death of the old king ren-

dered its solution immediately imperative. With her "making the whole go on" was the prime business which indeed either included or dwarfed all other points. "The whole" meant the Hanoverian establishment in England and the maintenance of its firm government. That Walpole had not flattered the fancies of the Prince of Wales in the last six years of the reign of George I, but had been solely the King's minister, was, after all, a sufficient guarantee that he would be equally staunch to George II. A firm alliance between sovereign and minister was clearly a necessity if the selfish factions in the peerage and the parliament were to be kept in control, and such an alliance was secured by the agreement of Caroline and Walpole.

The ascendancy of the Queen over her husband's mind seems to have been realized better by the general public than by some of the courtiers, who supposed themselves behind the scenes, and it gave as much amusement to the masses as it did annoyance to the politicians in opposition. Rude ballads from the very plain-spoken press of those coarse days even reached the palace sometimes, to the alarm of Walpole and the Queen, who feared lest the King should be enlightened too much:

> You may strut, dapper George, but 'twill all be in vain,
> We know 'tis Queen Caroline, not you, that reign,
> You govern no more than Don Philip of Spain.
> Then if you would have us fall down and adore you
> Lock up your fat spouse, as your Dad did before you.

Another ditty informed the streets and the court that

> Since England was England there never was seen
> So strutting a King and so prating a Queen.

George II was as yet far from regarding popular insult with the phlegmatic contempt of his later age. While Prince of Wales he and his wife had been spared the

abuse flung at his father; now their turn was come; the English, said foreigners, by nature hated their kings; but at first the discovery was painful to both of them. On one occasion, when such a squib came under his royal eyes, the monarch flew into one of his violent rages, vented upon the Earl of Scarborough, who was too truthful to conceal the fact that he, too, had seen the lampoon: Why had he not found out the man who inflicted this cowardly insult on his master—called him out and *shot* him? George was with difficulty persuaded not to dismiss the unlucky nobleman, though he was a favourite servant. In Hanover, of course, such insolence was impossible; either by law, or by prompter private vengeance, the offender would have been instantly punished. The English could never understand George's resentment of their ribald freedoms, for he attached no credit to their asseverations. His dignity was impervious to mob-assaults, nor was he suspicious. Utterly convinced of his wife's transcendant merits, and of her total absorption in himself, no insinuations against her could touch his perceptions. Her chief distinction, in his eyes, lay in her alacrity to please him, in her perfect sympathy with his every feeling, her patience beneath his reproofs, her utter submission to his wishes. He was the only person ignorant of the plain truth voiced by the rude ballads, nor did he dream, until the last hour of life, that she twisted him round her fingers.

Thus it was that Caroline gratified her real passion for power, and that the cost was so great surely proves how dearly she prized it. Her triumph in re-establishing Walpole destroyed the hopes of all the cliques which had committed themselves during the past six years to definite opposition. The Tory chance was gone, and Pope and Swift and the rest of their pamphleteers set to work to satirize the new sovereigns. More slowly but as surely vanished the expectations of some who had sup-

posed that the new King's mistress, Mrs. Howard, would be the dispenser of favour. Caroline, with all her tolerance, was, after all, human, and to have paid court to Mrs. Howard instead of to herself, as a step towards obtaining the King's favour, was perhaps the one thing she never could forgive. Compton and his friends should have ascribed some blame for their political fiasco in 1727 to their own mistake in this direction.

Not that Caroline was vindictive. It was many years (for example) before Chesterfield found himself finally edged out of court, and he had perpetrated other offences. Gay continued to enjoy government sinecures for years during which he was lampooning court and minister. Caroline had, in common with many great rulers, the strength of mind to remain unaffected by her personal distastes or personal likings in matters of the public service. She had a personal dislike to Lord Grafton, to Argyll and his brother Islay, to Horace Walpole, Sir Robert's brother, and, as is said, to the successful bishop, Hoadly. Yet the first was continued as Chamberlain of the royal household, the Campbells continued to serve the state and Walpole on their own haughty terms, the personal unpleasantnesses of Horace were condoned for the sake of his diplomatic ability and Sir Robert's affection for him, and the supple Hoadly, as the diplomatist bishop who could manage the Nonconformist conscience, was believed to enjoy as much of the Queen's favour as the excellent Wake and the disinterested Clarke. Neither, on the other hand, did Caroline's great partiality for young Lord Hervey lead to his elevation to any important post. He was well provided for, first as a Gentleman in the suite of Frederick, Prince of Wales, then as the King's Vice-Chamberlain. His usefulness was sufficiently rewarded by a pension from the King of £1,000, and he was, later, called to the House of Lords, but nothing beyond a Household post was offered. She called him "her child, her pupil, and

her charge," but she would not gratify his vanity by a political office for which he was unsuited.

The Queen's method of dealing with politics and politicians was gradually revealed during the ten years which were, in truth, the reign rather of Caroline II than George II. The first matter to be attended to, so soon as the reins of government had been once more entrusted to Walpole, was the Coronation.[1]

This was naturally to be a very splendid event. George II was not addicted to frequent ceremonials, but he demanded excessive propriety whenever one took place, just as, when he did wear fine clothes, "they not only were, but looked, fine."

Everything was conducted with splendour and dignity, so that a pattern and precedent was formed for subsequent coronations, yet there was a certain quietness. Caroline desired Mrs. Howard to have things properly prepared, and she, capable and exact as usual, found out, in the name of the Mistress of the Robes, what precedent required of the Queen, and saw that all was well managed. The long and exhausting ceremony was a little mitigated by the Queen's going privately to Westminster, as early as 7 o'clock in the morning, "being in an undress but everything new." She was conveyed in her closed, private chair, attended only by a very few persons, including Mrs. Howard, to an apartment prepared at Westminster, where the rest of her usual servants were awaiting her, much as if at home in the palace. They dressed her in the state robes, and then she went to meet the assembled peeresses, about 9 o'clock.

The procession, which marched between the dense throngs of spectators, along the raised gangway placed between Westminster Hall and the western door of the

[1] *Cf.* Lady Suffolk; Mrs. Delany; Lady M. W. Montagu; "Survey of London by a Citizen"; "A Foreign View of England" (by C. de Saussure).

Abbey, must have been the most magnificent ever seen at an English coronation. Their majesties were preceded by almost the whole body of peers and peeresses, bishops, judges, and knights of the great orders, all dressed in their splendid, old-fashioned robes of state, and the peeresses, who walked two and two, carrying their coronets like the peers, were literally blazing with jewels. To procure a sufficient quantity the stores of the London jewellers had been emptied and those of Paris and Amsterdam laid under contribution. It took a long while for the gorgeous company to file past, although the gangway, strewn with sweet-smelling herbs, was well protected from undue crowding by ample companies of soldiers; at one point there was a brief pause, when the old Duchess of Marlborough, being wearied, delighted the crowd by appropriately borrowing a drum from a drummer standing near, and sitting on it till she was able to proceed.

Over their majesties were held canopies, beneath which the figure of the King was almost invisible, but the Queen "walkt so forward she could be seen by everybody." Her clothes were "extravagantly fine though they did not make show enough for the occasion," and she had £2,400,000 worth of jewels upon "her petty-coat." Many of these had had to be borrowed and many hired, for of all the jewels of Queen Anne nothing had escaped the clutches of George I's Germans but one pearl necklace.

The Queen's train was borne by the three elder princesses (looking very well in their gowns of stiff silver tissue and purple mantles edged with ermine), and by four noble maidens who assisted them. They were attended by three ducal pages, and the Mistress of the Robes, the faithful Duchess of Dorset, besides Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Herbert, who, to some of the spectators, appeared to be the most striking couple of all the beautiful ladies, "their heads dressed with long locks and puffs and silver rib-

band." Others singled out the magnificent and becoming costume of Lady Delaware. Clever old Lady Orkney, once the acknowledged favourite of William III, could not avoid still showing herself remarkable, if only for ugliness and self-possession. The lovely Duchess of Queensberry, with more vanity, "appeared with not a jewel, ribband or puff to set her off, and everybody thought she did *not* appear to advantage."

In the Abbey, when the church service was over, four ladies held the pall while the Queen was anointed and crowned exactly like the King. The Duchess of Dorset and Mrs. Howard took the plain royal circlet of gold from her brow, and opened her tucker, that the Bishop might place the crown on her head and touch her with the sacred oil. Then they had to close "the tucker," be ready with a "coif" (or little handkerchief) to wipe away any superfluous drop of oil, and pin on the crown, which was an "imperial" diadem of gold, set with costly diamonds and fixed upon a cap of purple velvet turned up with ermine. However, almost at once Caroline retired into St. Edward's chapel, with her attendant ladies, where this crown was removed, and "offered" by the Queen, who then assumed a fine new crown, made on purpose for her to wear upon state occasions, so thickly studded with diamonds and pearls that the gold was scarcely to be seen.

The royal paraphernalia must have been heavy, for she had also to bear a sceptre 2 ft. 10 in. in length with a cross on the top adorned with precious stones, and there was an Ivory Rod of much the same length with a white enamelled dove on the top of it. She herself said that the weight of her jewelled gown was the worst thing she had to bear.

When the procession returned to the Hall, at 3 o'clock, a splendid banquet was standing ready to be partaken of, one feature of its magnificence being the lighting

of nearly 2,000 candles in the chandeliers all at once by a wonderful contrivance of the German Master of the Ceremonies, Heidegger. Only those who took part in the procession were placed at the banquet, but in galleries and stalls all round the Hall were crowds of spectators, to whom their aristocratic acquaintance kept running with refreshments from the tables, which they drew up in baskets with a string. They must have needed it, for they had been waiting during the long ceremony in the Abbey.

So soon as the royal Champion had ridden into the Hall and made the challenge the royal family left the banquet, and Caroline was able to withdraw to her retiring-room. There she was divested of the state robes by her usual servants, and she returned to St. James's privately in her closed chair without being discovered by the multitude.[1]

After the coronation came state ceremonies, Drawing-rooms, banquets, feasts, and masquerades. Conspicuous among the celebrations was a specially splendid Lord Mayor's Day. The royal family went in state to the traditional post for witnessing the procession, opposite Bow Church, conveyed in a fine royal coach of purple cloth drawn by eight cream-coloured horses (a Hanoverian custom), "the beautifullest creatures of their kind." With the King and Queen were the three elder princesses and the little Duke of Cumberland, now six years old; Frederick, Prince of Wales, was, strange to say, not yet come from Hanover; and the younger princesses were not introduced yet to public ceremonial. At the feast afterwards their Majesties were extremely gracious, especially to the Lady Mayoress and the Aldermen's wives, who were presented to the Queen. A wonderful cold luncheon of one hundred and twenty-nine dishes was

[1] For a complete account of the rest of the coronation ceremony, *see* de Saussure.

ready for them to partake of, and the Lady Mayoress waited at the Queen's elbow. Caroline, with her unfailing consideration, saw that her ladies-in-waiting were also rested and refreshed, and did them an honour and avoided confusion to the entertainers, by inviting them to sit down at the royal table. After the banquet the King stayed to watch the ball until midnight.

The winter went by in a round of gaiety in which all London joined. George II was not averse from entertainments, and he continued in office his father's master of the ceremonies, Heidegger, whose duties were much analogous to those of a Master of the Revels in more ancient times. The German sovereigns had set a fashion in London for masquerades, which, with their opportunities of fun, and of licence, were by many considered a danger to good manners and morals. The grand jury of London had actually "presented" Heidegger as one of the principal causers of the corruption of youth, at a moment when they wished to air their anti-Hanoverian feelings. And it is clear from Addison's description in 1716[1] that the masquerade which he witnessed at Somerset House offered an exhibition of coarseness which could hardly suggest anything but evil. It would almost seem that to the brute violence natural to a London mob the new century had added instigations to new immoralities.

Not all masquerades, however, were conducted with the uproarious licence of the more extreme libertines; plenty of superior people went to them and experienced no dangers, and there were not wanting counter attractions in the "bare-faced balls" of more private character which were given in plenty. People had a great love of dancing. The proper thing was first to dance some set dances, such as minuets, with much ceremony, and then to permit "country dances," which were far more popular and in which etiquette was partly laid aside. During

[1] In "The Freeholder."

the former partners were paired for the whole time, but in the latter every gentleman was allowed to lead out the lady of his choice. There was excellent music in those days; the best singers of Europe were to be heard in London, where Händel still controlled the opera, which George II patronized as steadily as his father, though not all the devotion of the princesses and of the few truly musical ladies of the great world could procure the support of fashion for the great maestro. The English stage was active enough, too, but it owed its popularity less to its merits than to the coarse taste of the Londoners and the cry to support its national productions in opposition to "foreign" music.

On the whole the new reign had opened with a cheerful festivity, which at first promised in no way ill for the repute of the King, especially as a number of George I's favourites retreated to Germany, and the new Sovereign filled the vacant posts with Englishmen. George II was free from sundry of the most unpopular faults of his father, and about his court and family there were some elements which should have made for popularity, according to the hint of the "Lilliputian" versifier:

Smile, smile,
blest isle,
grief past
at last
Halcyon
comes on.
New King,
bells ring,
new Queen,
blest scene.
. . . . .
Strange pack
sent back,
own folks
crack jokes.
Those out
may pout,
those in
may grin.
God send
no end
to line
divine
of George and Caroline.

The King and Queen frequently held levées and drawing-rooms, every day, apparently, when they were at

St. James's. Their reception began at 9.30 p.m., "Court hour" having already grown later, and it was the approved and fashionable custom for those who wished to be respectful to visit the royal drawing-room frequently, where the King and Queen would talk with a pleasant familiarity. Caroline was quick with the gracious compliment or kind inquiry which gratified the recipient by its proof that she knew the individuality and circumstances of her courtiers. Her birthday was naturally seized upon for particular demonstrations.

"On Saturday the first day of March," wrote Mrs. Pendarves,[1] "it being Queen Caroline's birthday, I dressed myself in all my best array, borrowed my Lady Sunderland's jewels, and made a tearing show. I went with my Lady Carteret and her two daughters. There was a vast Court, and my Lady Carteret got with some difficulty to the circle, and after she had made her curtsey made me stand before her. The Queen came up to her, and thanked her for bringing me forward, and she told me she was *obliged to me* for my pretty clothes, and admired my Lady Carteret's extremely; she told the Queen that they were my fancy, and that I drew the pattern. Her Majesty said she had heard that I could draw very well (I can't think who could tell her *such a story*); she took notice of my jewels; I told her they were my Lady Sunderland's; 'Oh,' says she, 'you were afraid I should think my Lord Selkirk gave them to you, but I believe he only admires, for he will not be so free of his presents.' . . . At night sure nothing but the Coronation could exceed the squeezing and crowding that was there, the ball-room was so excessive full that I could not see one dance but was thrust quite from my company. . . . I resigned my place and made an attempt to find my company but all in vain, I might as well have attempted to swim across the sea in a storm; and after

[1] *Née* Mary Granville, afterwards Mrs. Delany.

having been buffeted about and crushed to a mummy, my Lord Sunderland spied me out, and made me take his place.

"The clock struck twelve, the French dances were just over, and every man took the woman he liked best to dance country-dances. The Prince set the example by choosing the Duchess of Bedford, who is the queen of his fancy at present. . . . The King was in blue velvet, with diamond buttons, the hat was buttoned up with prodigious fine diamonds. The Queen was in black velvet, the Court being out of mourning only for that day. Princess Royal had white poudesoy embroidered with gold and a few colours intermixed; the petticoat was very handsome, but the gown looked poor, it being only faced and robed with embroidery. Princess Amely had a yellow and silver stuff, the pattern marked out with a thread of purple, and purple ribbons with pearl in her head, which became her. Princess Caroline had pink colour damask trimmed with silver. The Prince of Wales was in mouse-colour velvet turned up with scarlet and very richly embroidered with silver; he dances very well, especially country-dances, for he has a great deal of spirit."

Frederick, Prince of Wales, was eminently in his proper place, adding *éclat* to the ball. Unfortunately that was the only kind of place for which the meretricious young man was fit, and his arrival in England was the beginning of a long series of provocations, insults, and political difficulties with which the vicious and superficially clever Prince delighted to hamper his parents, and, in particular, to try the patience of his mother.

CHAPTER IX

FOES AND FRIENDS

IT would be charitable to permit a doubt whether George I, in educating his grandson in Hanover, had estimated the difficulties which he was thereby preparing for the boy's parents; but he could hardly have acted more skilfully if his sole purpose had been to prepare for them a lifelong trial.

Thirteen years had elapsed since the day when Frederick was left behind in Germany before his parents were in a position which permitted them to send for him, or even to transmit the orders for his household. He had been educated by tutors of his grandfather's choice, and on his visits to Hanover the grandfather had been enabled to acquire the influence over him denied to the parents, and an animosity against father and mother seems to have been instilled into the selfish lad's mind.

No responsibilities and no political training appear to have been imposed upon him, while, on the other hand, he was permitted to indulge in extravagance and, unhappily, in vices of which the court society of Hanover was but too finished a school. He had set up a mistress at the age of sixteen. Such an upbringing augured ill for the relations of the young man with his parents, but George I had provided, in addition, a complication certain to result in a quarrel.

George I's daughter, the Queen of Prussia, was bent upon a double marriage of her son (afterwards Fred-

erick II) with the eldest English princess, Anne, and of her daughter[1] with Prince Frederick of Hanover and England. That the King of Prussia was at daggers drawn with her brother George Augustus she recked little of, but old George I, in bestowing his approval on the scheme, was perfectly well aware that it was unwelcome to his son. The treaty of marriage was prepared, but George I put off signing it, so that at his death the question was still not formally settled. By that time the ill-will between Prince Frederick and his father was sufficiently acute to make it certain that worse would follow. The Prince had persuaded himself that he was in love with the plain little Princess of Prussia, and was bitterly incensed against his father for not forwarding the marriage.

George II was well aware of the temper of his son, and, anticipating the trouble he would certainly cause in England, was unwilling to bring him over from Hanover. Both he and Caroline were very fond of the young Duke of Cumberland, who was indeed always a good son to them; but it was not possible that he could in any way be put in his elder brother's stead, a place he never attempted to usurp. It was unfortunate that George let his reluctance to see his eldest son become known, and that he put off the coming of his heir so long as to cause comment. The mob, the opposition, and the Prince alike were thus provided with an admirable grievance to begin with.

Caroline, when she could not prevent, always tried to mitigate the mistakes of her husband. She managed to acquire and keep a certain influence with her son, who had at least a respect for her political wisdom; and although she could never obtain the least reality of affection from him she kept up appearances almost to the end

[1] Wilhelmina, afterwards the Margravine of Baireuth. *Cf.* her Memoirs.

of her life. But for the revelations of Hervey, the extent of her insight into the dangerous spitefulness of her son, or the strength of their mutual animosity, would never have been fully known. What were the precise causes of this deep gulf between son and parents can never now be ascertained. Lord Hervey knew, and had written it down; but he or his more scrupulous heirs destroyed those pages before his "History" was made public. Sir Robert Walpole knew, but he never told his gossiping son; and the grave Chancellor Hardwick, to whom he did intimate something, in confidence, only noted in his diary that the communication was "of too high and secret a nature even to be trusted to this narrative; but from thence I found great reason to think that this unhappy difference between the King and the Queen and his Royal Highness turned upon some points of a more interesting and important nature than have hitherto appeared."

That some serious cause existed for Caroline's indignation is practically certain; it would be wholly alien to her nature to express so great an antipathy and allow her daughters to express the same feeling, upon a slight ground, or the secondary one of the King's animosity.

Fritz arrived in England in the December of 1728, suddenly summoned by his father, it is said, on receiving the news of his intention to elope to Berlin and marry.

George II was receiving from Parliament £50,000 for the Prince's establishment; but he did not hand this sum over to his son. He himself paid the Prince's suite and charged himself with all necessary costs of his service in the apartments assigned to him at St. James's. Apparently £2,000 a month was paid to him for his personal expenses. The Prince naturally wished to have the control of the whole sum himself with a house and establishment of his own; but the King had more reason on his side than perhaps at first sight appears; for in Hanover

Frederick had piled up very heavy debts (which the King refused to pay, with more justice than magnificence), and he always continued to be absurdly extravagant.

The Prince had become sufficiently versed in the English tongue, and in the politics and manners of England, to behave with great credit on his first appearance, and he soon showed that he understood the art of acquiring a cheap popularity, to a degree which excited his mother's contempt.

In general company, or in the view of the mob, he carefully exhibited a most filial manner, although, as his parents were well aware, in the society of his intimates he spoke of them in most improper terms.

Frederick was perfectly acquainted with the advantages offered by the political system of England to a factious Prince of Wales, and he gave so hearty a greeting to the Opposition that contemporary critics began to aver that "the English representative constitution" necessitated a feud between the Sovereign and the heir. Much the same position was created as had obtained in 1718; but this time to a far more dangerous degree, in that Prince Frederick was restrained by no sense of duty or dignity, felt responsibility neither for the stability of the dynasty nor his own future conduct of government, and was actuated by a malicious personal spite against his parents. He would speak slightingly of his father's comprehension and conduct, and practised the easier modes of winning popularity. He was generous, almost with the lavishness of a child that knows not the uses of money, towards any who could reach him with a tale of distress, forgetful of anything he did not see. He was free-handed, too, in his amusements, especially over cards; and as he plunged recklessly into debt and left the settling to his father, the loud applause which was bestowed on his generosity was easily earned; while the intense dislike felt by George II to letting the private details of his

family life or personal expenditure become commonly known, led people to suppose that his assertions about the large sums the Prince cost him were fictitious. In the absence of outcries from the shopkeepers and the like it seems quite likely that George did pay a great deal.

The new Prince of Wales had only been a few months in England when George II gave himself the pleasure, so long withheld, of visiting his old home; and, in June, 1729, betook himself to Hanover for a sojourn of several months. The Londoners seem not to have expected that the new monarch would ever follow the example of his father in this respect, and grumbled; but as the King left behind the whole of the royal family, and entrusted the Regency, without reservation, to the capable hands of his wife, all the work of government went on smoothly. The appointment of the Queen to be Regent was, however, a great mortification to the conceited young Prince, who had supposed that he himself would be named Regent, with full powers; and from that moment the Prince began to worry his mother with every petty annoyance he was able to devise. The feud between the Prince of Wales and his parents only became known gradually; and during the King's first absence from England the royal family, all living together at Richmond, presented a merry and quite model spectacle. One of the Queen's most abject admirers[1] describes how the Prince "surprised the Queen and all his dear sisters with a very pritty entertainment at Richmond." This was a play acted in the garden, the Prologue whereof loyally suggested that Her Majesty's recent little indisposition proceeded from her distress on parting with the King, a possible sting lying in the understanding at Court that Her Majesty was greatly enjoying her unwonted freedom of action as well as her evident popularity and importance.

[1] Peter Wentworth, see the "Wentworth Papers." He was made an Equerry.

The same ardent courtier was "captivated by our Glorious Royal Family"; and in an ecstasy, when the Princess Anne "distinguished" him by the gift of a hunting suit—"'tis blue richly trimmed with gold, lined and faced with red. . . . I am prouder on't than of a blew or red ribbon." Attended by such enthusiasts the Queen and her children kept a cheerful court. She would not go to the principal royal residences during the King's absence; but affected a becoming retirement at Richmond and Kensington, places which she much preferred to Hampton Court and St. James's.

During her Regency in 1729 she could, for the first time in her life, live somewhat as she listed, and her activity in visiting the seats of the noblemen within reach of Richmond shows that the stationary and dull routine of life which usually was her lot was by no means of her own choice. She was not afraid of fatigue, and would sometimes drive such long distances that the return journey had to be made after dark, quite a feat of adventurousness in those days of abominable roads. The nobility were usually very ready to invite the royal party. Once the Duke of Newcastle entertained them to dinner at Claremont, when the Prince of Wales came to the table where the suite had been dining directly after dinner, and "drank a bumper of rack punch to the Queen's health, which you may be sure I devotely pledged, and he was going on with another, but her Majesty sent us word she was agoing to walk in the garden, so that broak up the company," probably just in time to save its sobriety—Newcastle, the Prince, and Mr. Wentworth were all untrustworthy in that particular. They "walked till candlelight, being entertained with very fine French horns, then return into his great hall, and everybody agreed never was anything finer lighted." By and by the Queen, Princess Caroline, and two of their quietest attendants—Lady Charlotte Roucy and Mr. Schutz—sat down to play

at quadrille, while in the next room the Prince had the fiddles, and they danced country dances merrily; the Prince with the Duchess of Newcastle, the Duke of Grafton with Princess Emily, etc. It is interesting to observe how the problem of *lighting-up*, in days of candles and ill-smelling oil, was one of the expensive fine-arts of life. It was just at this time that the Corporation of London made an effort to get the streets of the capital lighted at night.

The Duke of Grafton was a great favourite with the Princess Emily, who became almost as devotedly fond of horses and hunting as his Grace, but the Queen disliked him, and little wonder, for in his inordinate vanity at being a grandson of Charles II, he seemed to think himself almost one of the royal family, and would presume clumsily to tease her Majesty. He had got at a story that Caroline had had an early attachment to the Duke Frederick of Gotha (it must have been a very early and girlish fancy), and would say he wished he could have seen the man whom she could have been in love with. She would reply: "What, do you suppose I do not love the King?" The Duke answered, he wished he were the King of France, "then I would get at the truth whether you love him or not"—in allusion, as it seems, to her correspondence with the Duchess of Orleans, and the espionage system of the French post office. Grafton, constantly a member of the royal household, was not generous about money; he tried to avoid a visit from the royal family by professing that his house was too old to be fit to receive them. The Prince, however, mischievously assured him that he would bring tents and pitch them in the garden, and so his Grace could not get off. It is possible that Caroline may have felt some anxiety when she first perceived her second daughter's intimacy with Grafton, lest some breath of scandal might arise, for the princess got into deep disgrace when she and the

Duke once "got lost" out hunting, and took shelter together in a distant lodge. But the strong good sense and dignity of Princess Emily (*Amely* the family spelt it usually) must soon have set her mother's mind at ease, though whether she ever gave a regretful thought to the lonely lives to which her daughters Emily and Caroline were condemned by the strict German rules on royal marriages, there is nothing to show.

A great part of our intimate knowledge of the home life of Caroline and her children comes from the pen of Lord Hervey, who is an extremely important person to all students of Caroline's life. His "Memoirs" were composed secretly and left ready for publication, with the proviso that a long number of years should elapse before the box in which he had locked them should be opened. His heirs punctually observed the prohibition, and thus the "Memoirs" came into print with an obvious guarantee of truthfulness. In nearly all points which can be tested (though not actually in all) his accuracy is corroborated by other contemporary evidence. On the other hand, in estimating the true value of these wonderful volumes,—wonderful for the impression of veracity produced, and the crisp interest in the portrayal of times not in themselves of absorbing interest, it must never be forgotten that they were composed as definitely with a purpose as any work of poetry or fiction.

The characters of Hervey's piece are dramatized, and are all presented through a consistent medium of cynical criticism. He may assuredly be acquitted of extenuating aught, but there is likelihood that he set down much in malice. He despised the King, and hated Frederick, Prince of Wales. Hervey was a good hater; when he quarrelled it was for life, and it is just to add that he served the Queen and Walpole during his life with unwavering fidelity, however he may have portrayed them for posterity, resentfully conscious that his own

talents had never won from them a reward which he himself considered adequate.

In his secretly written "Memoirs" he revenged himself on all he hated to the exact degree which his future readers would find credible. He is a prose Pope, and we dare not trust the light and shade of his portraits, accurate though the outline may be.

The Queen, to whom he was bound by manifold ties and kindnesses, and whom he professed during his life to serve with absolute devotion, he represents in as paltry a position as he can indicate. The deeper elements of her nature he was incapable of fathoming. His attention is concentrated on her foibles, her coarse way of talking, her gibes at the bores with whom her husband surrounded her, her increasing dread and detestation of her eldest son, and, above all, on the details of the manœuvres by which she managed the King, and the humiliations which she had to endure from him.

Of Caroline's marvellous patience, of her heroic endurance of terrible pain for the sake of the King and of her own dignity, of her generosity, perspicacity and wisdom, of her unselfishness, and of the depth of the affection which her children and her husband always retained for her, he tells, as he sees, nothing. One sign of grace there is, indeed, in Hervey's brilliant dramatic story: he hardly so much as mentions the sweet and lovely woman whom he married, made use of, and neglected; and he mentions but briefly and without one sneer, even with a phrase of encomium, the gentle princess Caroline, whose only happiness was derived from the mother she adored, and whose unhappy fate it was to love the brilliant Hervey. Silence is the best tribute Hervey can pay to the two women to whom the reader's pitying sympathy is drawn, perhaps, most strongly by the records and correspondence of the time.

John Hervey had been one of George's household

when Prince of Wales. He married Molly Lepell in 1720, became his father's heir, on the death of his elder brother, in 1723, and continued a close attendant on George and Caroline till after their coronation. He had then left England on a pleasure tour, made acquaintance with Frederick, Prince of Wales, whom he followed back to England, and for a short time was one of his suite. But after living for a little time on terms of intimate friendship with the Prince, he quarrelled violently with him over the favours of a frail and fashionable beauty, and resigned his post, to become once more a member of King George's court, as Vice-Chamberlain, in 1730.

He was thus in constant intimacy with the King and Queen, and the former, nowise displeased by Hervey's hatred of the Prince of Wales, gave him the handsome pension of £1,000 a year. His talents and his favour at court made him important enough to be courted by both Walpole and Pulteney. Though the latter had been an early friend of both Hervey and his wife, Walpole won the courtier's alliance, and the two used to work together when it was desirable to arrange information for the Queen, or influence the King to distribute the rewards and disgraces of the court as suited Walpole's system of government. He was ever "At the ear of *Eve*, familiar Toad," as Pope complained. For Hervey's adherence to the King and the minister plunged him into quarrels with old friends; he fought a duel with Pulteney, and, more dangerous, bandied sarcasms with Pope, who came off easily the victor and has left a portrait of Hervey (as "Sporus")[1] which matches anything in Hervey's own malicious prose. Hervey was very handsome in feature, but so delicate—his fond old father averred that it was owing to his addiction to "that detestable and poisonous plant, *tea*"—that he had to practise a rigorous abstinence, and to disguise the ghastly pallor of his face he would

[1] In the Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot.

use cosmetics like a lady of fashion. In culture and wit he was eminently a man of his epoch, politely godless, and fashionably, but not obtrusively, immoral. His skits and verses and his incisive sayings were welcome to the court party, for the greater part of "the wits" were to be found on the opposition side, and the first outburst of the opposition to Walpole (and therefore to the sovereigns) in this new reign came from the literary and fashionable world, of which Pope's friend Gay was for the time the protagonist.

John Gay was one of those fortunate characters whose charm fascinates their friends, and not only Swift and Arbuthnot and Pope, but dukes and duchesses and polite society as a whole, felt sure that so charming a man must be a great poet.

When the new royal family first came to England, Gay, who had once seen Caroline in Hanover, tried to make a bid for court favour with a copy of verses, like any other begging scribbler. But what Pope attacked in other men he found graceful in Gay, though the far from fluent poet had found nothing to say in his "Epistle to a Lady" (Mrs. Howard), on the arrival of the Princess of Wales, 1714, except quite plainly, that he complimented her because he expected her to do something for him, and grumbled:

> Places I found were daily given away
> And yet no friendly gazette mentioned Gay.
>
> You have, 'tis true, the noble patron shown,
> But I, alas, am to Argyll unknown.

The piece was scarcely polite in its effrontery, in spite of a few pretty lines, *e.g.*:

> Tho' unsuccessful, happy whilst I see
> Those eyes that glad a nation smile on me.

Gay, however, was in time given the usual sinecure, a Commissionership of Lotteries, as well as some free

apartments in Whitehall. But he and his friends could only be grieved at the inadequacy of such slight remuneration to his splendid dormant genius, and cherish hopes of what the recognized patroness of literary men would do for him when she mounted the throne. Among the gentle productions of Gay's blameless pen was a small book of fables for children, dedicated to the little Duke of Cumberland, and presented to his mother. And when Caroline came to be Queen she appropriately rewarded, as she supposed, the courteous poet, not merely by taking the entire Court to witness a farce he had composed, "The What d'ye Call it," but also by the offer of another practically sinecure post, that of Gentleman Usher to the Princess Louisa, with a salary of £150. The deeply offended poet first visited on his early patron and friend, Mrs. Howard, his disgust at this paltry offer—to be usher to a baby of three years old—then set his brains to work to visit his wrath on the court, and, in particular, on the minister whose known antipathy to poets must have brought her Majesty to inflict so shocking an insult. The result was the famous "Beggars' Opera."

This celebrated work possessed almost every quality calculated to secure an immediate success, and by its political virtue has retained a longer fame than might otherwise have resulted. It was primarily an English parody of the Italian opera patronized so steadily by royalty. Well-known popular tunes provided the music of its comic songs. The idea of presenting a highway robber as the hero, with thieves and mercenary thief-catchers as the *dramatis personae*, was so treated as to provide a running caricature of fashionable London life, made realistic by scraps from the life of the streets, while the appearance of the principal actors, and sundry catch-words in the dialogue, convinced the public that an amusing satire on prominent ministers was being set

before them. Of course, an unprecedented success ensued. Manager and poet made great profits, whence the joke that the "Beggar's Opera" "had made Gay rich, and Rich gay." The leading actress, Miss Fenton, became the rage of the town, and eventually married the Duke of Bolton, and society went wild over the play and its songs. "You must sing it" (wrote Mrs. Pendarves, in February, 1729) "everywhere but at church if you have a mind to be like the polite world."

Gay was a little mystified by his great success, and now denied that he had had any thoughts of politics, now took credit for a Tory patriotism, but he set to work at once on a sequel, called "Polly," which was to be much more political and biting than the original opera. On this Walpole took quiet action: it was not pleasant to have himself and his brother-minister, Townshend, held up to the roars of the mob as disguised felons, and that by a man who was drawing the pay of the government he lampooned. He desired the Lord Chamberlain to inform the management that "Polly" must not be played.

Hereupon Gay was once more upon his pedestal of unappreciated genius. All the opposition became his voluble friends. His patroness, the lovely Duchess of Queensberry (ever making herself noticeable in some way in the fashionable world), declared it should be published by subscription, and ran about with a pencil and notebook, talking people into subscribing a veritable fortune for her lucky poet.

She had the audacity to canvas in the Queen's drawing-room, when the King, on coming into the room and "seeing her Grace very busy in a corner with three or four men, asked her what she had been doing. 'What must be agreeable, she was sure, to anybody so humane as his Majesty,'" was her impertinent reply, "'an act of charity to which she hoped even to bring his Majesty to

contribute.'" The King said little at the time, and the Duchess ascribed her subsequent disgrace to the Queen, but one would suppose she could hardly have expected to be permitted to be rude to the sovereign in his own palace. A formal message was sent to her requesting her to refrain from coming to court, to which the arrogant Duchess, determined to have the last word, penned the following reply (dated 27th February, $172\frac{8}{9}$):

"That the Duchess of Queensberry is surprised and well pleased that the King hath given her so agreeable a command as to stay from Court, where she never came for diversion but to bestow a great civility on the King and Queen; she hopes by such an unprecedented order as this is, that the King will see as few as he wishes at his Court, particularly such as dare to think or speak truth. I dare not do otherwise, and ought not, nor could have imagined that it would not have been the very highest compliment that I could possibly pay the King to endeavour to support truth and innocence in his house, particularly when the King and Queen both told me that they had not read Mr. Gay's play. I have certainly done right then to stand by my own words rather than his Grace of Grafton's, who hath neither made use of truth judgment nor honour, through this whole affair either for himself or his friends."

Grafton was the unlucky Lord Chamberlain to whom it had fallen to give the official order prohibiting the production of "Polly."

If such was the treatment Caroline might expect from a prominent English peeress—she had already been made aware of the manners of the Duchess of Buckingham—it is not surprising that she should protect herself from any more such impertinences by allowing the Duchess to remain unforgiven.

Lady Hervey, who did not love Kitty Queensberry, told her sarcastically that "now she was banished the

court had lost its chief ornament." The Duchess gravely replied, "I am entirely of your mind."

It is refreshing to turn to better manners. There were some, at all events, of Caroline's court who could appreciate her kindness, and the quick thought which always strove to put the shy or the anxious at ease. The gratitude of one great lady has survived. Old Lady Orkney, who had known four courts, entertained the royal party in state, and it seems that the pompous obstinacy of Caroline's chamberlain, Grantham, interfered with the studious preparations of the Countess and her servants disastrously, upon which he took upon himself to scold the domestics, and upset the equanimity of the Earl as well. But Caroline soothed the hurt feelings: "I have seen condescension in princesses," wrote Lady Orkney afterwards, "but none that ever came up to her Majesty, nay, not all the good you have ever said would make me imagine what I saw and heard. We all agreed her Majesty must be admired; and, if I may use the term, it was impossible to see her and not to love her."

CHAPTER X

CAROLINE'S POLITICAL WORK

QUEEN CAROLINE'S whole-hearted support of Sir Robert Walpole, and his long tenure of power in consequence of it, are facts so well known that it is apt to be forgotten how remarkable were the circumstances, and how personal a matter the appointment of ministers still was in England, where the organization of parties, and the almost automatic effect of majorities was as yet but in embryo. Many offices were still disposed of by the King's order. No minister could long retain office against his will, and the bestowal of titles, pensions, and places was by no means as yet vested in the chief minister. The very position of a "prime" minister was a novelty, constantly declaimed against as destructive of the Constitution, and in consequence the first two Hanoverian kings, who could not avoid dependence upon a principal minister, felt their personal credit to be involved in his, while he, in his turn, was continually alive to the necessity of satisfying the feelings and guiding the private opinions of the sovereign whose servant, in a very direct sense, he was. It was for this reason that the offices in the Royal Household were so important. Their holders had the opportunity of giving information in their own way to their Majesties, or perhaps instilling it by the medium of one of the princesses or a lady-in-waiting, and Caroline, well aware of the biassed

manner in which news was likely to reach her—or be concealed from her—appears to have made it understood from the first that politics were not to be discussed by her ladies. Men of letters, theology, or science, opportunities for doing charity or justice, they might bring to her notice, and find her a ready listener, but in the political region she trusted to Sir Robert Walpole, and she made great use of Lord Hervey to bring her tidings, not so much of events, as of the opinions of prominent persons.

The result of her determination to maintain Walpole's ministry was the continuance of a stability which he had first bestowed on the conduct of the government. During the reign of George I, before the South Sea catastrophe (a blessing in disguise) had compelled the establishment of a strong ministry, momentous changes among the holders of office had occurred four times in seven years, the result chiefly of personal jealousies among the Whig nobility.

Caroline was as resolved as Walpole to maintain a steady government and a continuous policy, and they are jointly entitled to the credit of keeping the House of Brunswick on the English throne and putting off the last great Jacobite effort to a date when it might effervesce harmlessly.

On the accession of George II England was nominally at war with Spain, or rather, negotiations to end the condition of nominal war were dragging on, considerably complicated by George I's definite promise (written with his own hand) to restore Gibraltar to Spain. Just as the old King died the opposition discovered this enormity, and were on the point of raising a storm when the accession of George II, and the confidence felt that he would not be likely to fling away any part of his rights, calmed them into declaring their reliance upon him for "preserving his undoubted right to Gibraltar and Minorca."

And the peace which was shortly concluded appeared to be sufficiently satisfactory.[1]

George II had sufficient common sense, when directed by an abler spirit, to make him a very tolerable ruler. He had a strong sense of propriety and of duty towards England as well as to his more beloved Hanover, characteristically evinced in his punctiliousness in keeping all the little private properties of the English kings in London, and those of the Elector of Hanover in Hanover. He was not likely to sacrifice the interests of Great Britain to Hanover in his father's style, and in spite of his natural fondness for things military and hankering after warlike fame, Caroline and Walpole between them were able to keep him resolutely at peace when all the other monarchs of Europe entangled themselves in the Polish Succession War.

In that intricate quarrel both King and Queen felt deep interest. It renewed the ancient struggle between the Empire and France. German politics, which were largely concerned, were familiar to them and touched the interests of Hanover. Caroline always retained a friendly feeling for her old suitor, now the Emperor Charles VI, towards whom George II entertained the traditional Hanoverian loyalty. And the King had quite sufficient ill will to his brother-in-law of Prussia to be anxious to prevent him from drawing too much profit out of the troubled waters. Personally Caroline would have liked to support the Emperor as much as her husband longed to be commanding an army in the field, yet so clear was her vision that Walpole was able to convince her of England's total lack of concern in the war, and of the risks to the King's security which participating in it might entail. She had the strength to pursue the wiser policy even against the impulses of her

[1] Peace of Seville, 1729. The ambassador was William Stanhope, brother of Charles Stanhope, created later Earl Harrington.

own sympathies, but she could not resist occasionally grumbling at Sir Robert and accusing him of "partiality to England"—no such very absurd speech from an Electress of Hanover and Queen of Ireland—to which Sir Robert replied that she had so much more at stake than he that she ought to be doubly biassed.

She bent her energies, therefore, to keeping the King at peace, and it was in the main due to her that Walpole could make his famous boast: "Madam, there are 50,000 men slain this year in Europe, and not one Englishman." It was not without continual effort that the Queen and the minister succeeded, for on the other side was the Hanoverian minister, Hattorf, who was constantly urging his master to join the Emperor. Happily the Hanoverians had far less hold over George II than over his father, but they were backed by a number of English sycophants who tried to make their court by flattering the personal tendencies of the King, from the Duke of Newcastle, effusive over the superior *nobility* of war to peace, to the foreign-mannered fop, Lord Grantham, with his persistent: "I hate the French, I do hope as we shall beat the French." The Queen used to get Hattorf, a very good reasoner, to write down his arguments for her, and these she showed to Walpole, who wrote down his refutations of them for her to produce to the King, nor did she fail to emphasize Sir Robert's master argument, that a war abroad would mean a Jacobite rising at home.

The Queen's influence proved paramount, and in the end she had her triumph when the King actually thanked Sir Robert Walpole for having persuaded him "to keeping quiet." All he could do was to evince his interest by studying the news of the war with so much zeal that the impatient Princess Royal (as Anne's title was decreed to be) declared that he kept his family in the utmost discomfort during the progress of the famous siege of

Philippsburg when "he snapped and snubbed every mortal for a week because he began to think it would be taken." At last it was, and his daughter, awaiting the event with much apprehension, was quite disconcerted to find that her father had recovered a perfect calmness. Lord Hervey suggested that he perhaps was like David over his dying child. "It may be like David," she retorted, "but I am sure it is not like Solomon."

Whatever Walpole wished to have instilled into the King's mind he would first impart to the Queen, and he used to visit her secretly for this purpose at St. James's, coming to her apartments by the private staircase, called the Back Stairs, which served her household. There was a similar private access to the King's apartments. By the Back Stairs several of her Majesty's attendants had their suites of "lodgings," and as Lord Hervey's were at the foot of it the minister used to come under cover of visiting his friend, and thence be conducted to the Queen. As a rule, when Walpole came officially to see the King, which he did almost daily, he would be brought by George to the Queen and bidden to repeat to her all he had just been saying, in fact all that they had previously composed together: she would then make semblance of surprised pleasure at the King's confidence and listen to what she was told without betraying any previous inkling of it. Or if she happened to be sitting in the King's apartment when the minister was announced she would rise to withdraw, with some modest phrase of women not understanding business, and the King would then usually bid her remain, and take a pleasure in the gentle deference she would show to his opinions. Never did he imagine that the two concerted plans beforehand, and that the wife whose counsel he always relied on had really made up her mind long before he came, as he thought, to confide to her the secrets of the State. What, perhaps, is as remarkable, is that no one member of the royal family

or the court, aware of the Queen's system, ever betrayed her. Once George happened to come into his daughters' room, which was next to the Queen's, while Walpole was holding one of his conversations with her, and great was the minister's alarm lest the King should have overheard anything and should consign him to ruin in consequence. On such small points, it seems, might the position of a "prime" minister depend.

The King, says his remorseless dissecter, Hervey, "as he was infinitely jealous of being governed, he was never to be led but by invisible reins," (as if most people are to be led by obvious ones), and the Queen got him gradually to adopt her opinions "by instilling her sentiments in such a manner as made him think they arose originally from himself. She always at first gave in to all his notions, though never so extravagant, and made him imagine any change she wrought in them to be an afterthought of his own."

By whatever means she succeeded, her success was a national blessing. Caroline understood England well enough to see that the position of her family was not yet established there. Precious years had been wasted during the last reign, and the forces of disorder were so active that Order, and its attendant, Prosperity, could only be got by maintaining Walpole and Walpole's rigidly peaceful policy.

Caroline's powers of persuasion were often exercised with this object of maintaining tranquillity in the Houses of Parliament, even over incidental matters, and as the Lords were then more independent and more dangerous to the Government than the Commons, she would often talk over affairs with any peer or bishop thought to be wavering in his allegiance. Thus, when the Quakers' Tithe Bill was proposed, in 1736, to relieve the scruples of the Quakers and free them from malicious legal persecution by the provision of a machinery which was

adjusted to their consciences, and Caroline understood that a party of the bishops intended to oppose it, she sent for them to come to see her, and rebuked them for their intolerance in terms so well chosen that their opposition was retracted. On the other hand, when in 1730 a motion was to be made to repeal the Corporation and Test Acts, to which Walpole would not assent because he knew what a torrential outburst of "The Church in danger!" would ensue if he were to do so much justice to the Dissenters, the Queen, though not out of sympathy with the cause of liberty, sent for one of the principal political guides of the Protestant Nonconformists to assure herself of his steadfastness. This was Hoadly, a great light of the "Low Church" and latitudinarian party, whose usefulness in politics procured his advancement from bishopric to bishopric,[1] and to save whom from censure over the once-famous "Bangorian" controversy Convocation had been left prorogued since 1717. Hoadly was actually convinced by the Queen, and persuaded his Dissenting friends to be content with Walpole's practical redress of the wrong by an annual indemnity bill; that is to say, the Statutes remained on the roll, the Dissenters habitually disregarded them, and an annual pardon was passed for everybody concerned, on the same plan as the annual mutiny bill to provide for a standing army which the law of the land rendered illegal.

It was not easy, however, to keep pace with Hoadly's sense of his own desert, and when he had been passed over in an appointment to the see of Durham, Walpole feared his resentment. Caroline's style of complimenting the bishop into pledging his support to the Government was masterly. Somewhat indignantly he repudiated the suspicion of the loyalty of his vote, but allowed the Queen to see that he certainly thought Durham his due

[1] *Cringing* Thackeray calls his mode of progress, but *soaping* would be more accurate.

and Walpole ungrateful. Caroline made a sort of courteous apology for her own doubts. She was extremely glad, she said, to hear his promise, for though she knew his worth too well to believe anything to his disadvantage lightly, yet "you know one is sometimes brought by one's own weakness and other people's wickedness to entertain suspicion of one's friends which, in reason and justice perhaps, one ought never to have given ear to." Hoadly took the hint and continued the steady supporter of the hand which in due time raised him to Winchester.

While the Queen and the minister were carefully restraining the King from going to war abroad, an unexpected crisis arose at home. The opposition was reinforced by men of talent whom Walpole had driven from his side by his unyielding engrossment of all power himself. This unpleasing trait in the great minister's character lent point to the accusation levelled at him of being a "Sole Minister" such as had not been since the days of Charles I—and Strafford had lost his head.

The Queen does not seem to have interfered with his successive dismissals of ministers whose rivalry he feared, although, like the King, she felt some regret for the loss of Carteret. But in the composition of her own household the prime minister's prejudices were not regarded. Mrs. Clayton, whom Walpole heartily detested, and a friend, too, of Carteret's, remained to the end a trusted friend of the Queen; and her husband, in spite of Walpole's peevishly expressed resentment, was made a peer. It is an interesting example of Caroline's real disregard of party, like her making Friend, the Jacobite, her physician.

The opposition, of which by 1733 Pulteney, Chesterfield and Carteret were to be counted the leaders, found no opening for attack in Walpole's foreign policy; a "German war" would hardly have been a good cry,

but, as their sole object was to turn the minister out of office, not to inaugurate any different line of policy, they contrived, with startling effrontery, to create a grievance out of his practical scheme of much needed financial reform—the Excise Bill of 1733. Out of the sensible proposals which would at once have eased the burden of fraud, and of smugglers and preventive men under which the country was to groan for another half century, the patriotic opposition created a bogey of "An Universal Excise" which was to grind the nation into poverty in order to satisfy the avarice of the minister and his sovereigns, and with exquisite skill painted the caricature of a Tyrant enslaving free Britons by an army of excise officers, from whose inquisition no election and no household would be free. Recognizing that the Queen was the mainstay of the minister whom they hated, the opposition, before proceeding to extremities, tried conciliation, and commissioned an eminent diplomatist, Lord Stair, who would be able to remonstrate with her in French, the language she always preferred, to endeavour to detach her from her alliance with Walpole. Stair was a man much disliked, and Caroline may have recollected ill tales of him, as ambassador at Paris, from the Duchess of Orleans; but, in any case, this was no occasion for conciliation, and she was apt to give rein to her gift for plain speaking on such occasions.[1] He began, with some want of tact, by expounding directly the baseness of Walpole, the degree to which the King was mistaken in him, and the iniquity of Walpole's Scotch ally, Lord Islay: "What cannot that man persuade you to who can make YOU, Madam, love a Campbell!" till at length the Queen stopped his invective by bidding him recollect that he was speaking of the King's servant, and to the King's wife.

Checked in his personal diatribe, Lord Stair betook

[1] *Cf.* Hervey's account of the conversation.

himself to the Bill—so wicked, so dishonest; his conscience would never permit, etc. "Ah, my Lord, cries the Queen, "Ne me parlez point de *Conscience*, vous me faites évanouir."

Offended though he felt, the disconcerted deputy tried next the artifice of a loftier argument, and began upon the free liberties of constituents. Caroline interrupted him in her matter-of-fact style: "Sure, my Lord, you think you are either talking to a child or to one that doats; for, supposing this Bill to be everything which you have described it to be, do you imagine I should be weak enough to believe that *you* would oppose it for the reasons you have given? . . . And," added she, "I am no more to be imposed upon by your professions than I am to be terrified by your threats." Thus dismissed, Stair endeavoured to cover his failure by declaring that he "had staggered" the Queen by telling her home truths.

The opposition hereupon included the King and Queen in their unscrupulous campaign. The war of papers and pamphlets, organized, as every one knew, by Pulteney, spared no vilification or ridicule to any one or to any detail of the royal Household or Walpole's government. One of the favourite modes of attack was to dilate upon some epoch of past or foreign history in such a way as to imply an exact parallel, as: "Cardinal de Retz, speaking of an *Unpopular Queen* who supported a *detested first minister*, said, etc." In the end, Hervey says, the steady scurrility of the "Craftsman," Pulteney's weekly paper, "lashed the King and Queen into insensibility"; but at first the blows made their Majesties wince, while the storm stirred, particularly in London, was nearly as bad as a Jacobite insurrection could have been. "Liberty, Property, and No Excise" were the toasts of county meetings. "No slavery, no Excise, no Wooden Shoes," roared the mobs in the streets of London.

Wooden shoes, as the mark of the supposedly enslaved Frenchmen, stood to the mob for a type of abject poverty.

When the day arrived for the parliamentary second reading, the mob around the Houses of Parliament was so threatening, that troops were secretly prepared. Threats and hustling awaited the "members of the Court party," as they were dubbed, and Walpole slipped out of the House of Commons by a back door.

The King and Queen felt the most intense concern for the Bill, not so much for its inherent merits as for a test case whether they or the mob were to guide the government. George was furious at the unscrupulous tactics of Pulteney, who declared that the minister's epitaph should be "Here lies the man who would have enslaved his country by an Excise," and he showed his admiration of the gallant and skilful fight his minister was making, often crying out, "with colour flashing into his cheeks and tears sometimes in his eyes, and with a vehement oath, 'He is a brave fellow; he has more spirit than any man I ever knew.'" But the petitions from all the reputable associations of the country and the rioting of the rest could not be disregarded. Walpole was less staggered by his own narrow escape from lynching, avoided by the promptitude of a Scotch member who drew his sword in the faces of the rabble and kept them off while the minister retreated, than by the thought that the Jacobites might find their opportunity in the general rage, and he preferred to yield to the storm rather than plunge the country into insurrection, however brief. He had to explain this to the King and Queen, and begged them, if they preferred that method, to dismiss him from his post, they need not fear that he would embarrass their next minister by entering into opposition. His proposition was made first to the Queen, who, deeply touched, declared she could never be so ungrateful and cowardly as to seek popularity by such a step, and when

Walpole next made the suggestion to the King, he, too —as Caroline told Hervey—made "the most kingly, sensible and resolute answer," and assured Sir Robert that never should his devotion to his master be so ill rewarded. "But whether the Queen dictated the words before he spoke them, or embellished them afterwards, I know not," comments Hervey.

Caroline bitterly hated yielding. She went so far as to consult the faithful Scarborough about the temper of the troops. He could only reply that, as for his own regiment, he could answer for his men facing the Pretender, but not the opposers of the Excise Bill. "We must then drop it," she said, with tears in her eyes.

So much agitated was she that the tears ran down her cheeks, and she could not at first control her voice to tell Hervey—"It is over, we must give way." The signs of her weeping were even visible at the drawing-room; she could not face the evening out as usual, but retired before the customary hour. At the same time Sir Robert Walpole was announcing the capitulation to his colleagues over the supper-table, saying, "with a sort of unpleased smile: 'This dance it will no further go, and to-morrow I intend to sound a retreat.'" He in fact deranged the plans of the Opposition by himself moving the postponement of the Bill to a date in the parliamentary recess, *i.e.*, dropping it altogether.

The joy which hailed the minister's withdrawal of his bill was as frantic as if a public enemy had been defeated instead of a wise financial measure. The Monument and the whole City were illuminated, the Lord Mayor took the lead in the rejoicings, the usual bonfires blazed, and effigies of the Queen and Walpole were burned at them together. Similar scenes took place in many towns; at Oxford the crowds caroused three nights in the streets to "King James III."

If the opposition expected that his virtual defeat would

drive the Minister to resign, they must have been deeply chagrined. Caroline's determination was fixed not to displace a wise man for a set of reckless men of faction. The expressions used about the sovereigns by the leaders of the opposition, in their newspapers, scarcely smoothed their own path, and the King and Queen prided themselves on making their continued protection of Sir Robert the reward of his steadfastness. The royal intentions were soon marked by the dismissal of Lord Chesterfield, perhaps the most distinguished of the Whig opponents of the measure, along with other defaulters, and the greedy perceived that it would be unsafe as yet to detach their allegiance from Walpole.

Temporary as this great agitation had been it proved how easily the spirit of disaffection was roused, and it was fortunate that in the spring of the same year the King and Queen were able to take a step which met with popular approbation by betrothing their eldest daughter, Anne, to the Prince of Orange. The watchwords of the anti-Jacobite mobs, "Protestantism," "William the Deliverer," "the Glorious and Happy Revolution," were shouted almost as readily as the other cries; and the opposition were driven to vying with the ministry in their zeal for a proper endowment for the Princess Royal, whose selected husband, high as was his lineage and prestige, possessed but meagre revenues. The King bestowed £5,000 a year on his daughter from the Civil List, and Parliament guaranteed the payment during her life.

This brief unanimity of the Whigs did not last long. Anne was married in 1734, and the Prince of Wales seized the opportunity to importune afresh, and not without justice, for a separate establishment and the arrangement of a proper marriage for himself.

After much effort on Caroline's part the danger of a family quarrel in the matter, and the participation of the

opposition therein, was overcome by the arrangement of a marriage for Prince Frederick with the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, and the provision of a suitable establishment. The marriage was popular in the country and produced more than the usual shower of loyal addresses and congratulations, to which George II always replie[illegible]y pleasantly. But the address from the House of Cor[illegible]s gave opportunity for a brilliant young recruit o[illegible] opposition to perpetrate a tirade which the King co[illegible] easily be expected readily to forgive.

William [illegible] speech upon this occasion purported to be merely [illegible] the p[illegible]erics to which the oratory of [illegible] stooped. It was the speech so note[illegible] speeches of [illegible] than those of Cicero."[1] It was [illegible] series of deliberate sarcasms on the mutual relations of the King and his son:

"If anything [illegible] sure of gratifying [illegible] can on [illegible] most d[illegible] submis[illegible] "in his private retirement . . . engaged in the noble exercise of humanity, benevolence, and every social virtue . . ." And much more of the sort and especially as to the mutual affection of son and parents, Pitt poured forth, in substantiation of the universal joy at the Prince's marriage, "a step which the nation thought could never be taken too soon." The nation had seen the King refusing for seven years to permit his son to marry; every one knew of the tension between him and his parents, and the House was as well aware as Cornet Pitt of the manner in which the Prince of Wales spent his "private retirement," and of the fashion in which he had

[1] See Francis Thackeray's "Life of Pitt," vol. i, p. 12, and Macaulay's "Essay" thereon.

requested, and his father bestowed, the permission to marry. What wonder that the King should resent fiercely a series of sarcasms patent to all the audience, which he was utterly powerless to answer? This was not the only offence given by young Pitt to the King. He was one of the fiercest and most unreasonable denouncers of the King's employment of German troops—under the circumstances a necessary safeguard—and the result was that at the end of the session Pitt was deprived of his post in the army, while the King harboured a distrust of him never to be overcome, even when, years later, Pitt was to transfer his hatred to his present ally Pulteney, and to become the most correctly loyal of ministers.

Neither Chesterfield nor Pitt suffered in purse or position, for the Prince of Wales instantly took them into his household, and Pitt became one of his Grooms of the Bedchamber. The Prince's separate establishment of course became, as George and Caroline had foreseen, the open focus of opposition and of virulent animosity to their Majesties.

Great attention was given by the Queen to political business after the Excise scheme was finally dropped; and it was virtually her determination which kept Walpole securely in office at that time, when the turbulence of party rose higher than it was to do again for many years. In particular, the election of Scotch peers for the new parliament of 1734, and the trial of the Commons' election petitions, when they came to be heard in the Lower House, drew her attention. The former election was carried without difficulty for the Government nominees; most Scottish peers were poor, and pensions and court salaries really provided their means of subsistence. But as a few troops had been kept in readiness on the day of election, in case of a riot, the opposition clamoured that the election had been "carried by force," and brought in a motion to that effect, which was, however, defeated, much

to the relief of the King and Queen. In the House of Commons, however, not all of the election petitions, then merely a trial of party votes, were carried in favour of the government; whereupon Caroline fairly lost patience with Sir Robert Walpole—"which was very rare"—telling him that he "either neglected these things and judged ill enough to think they were trifles, though in Government, and especially in this country, nothing was a trifle; or perhaps (says she) 'there is some management I know nothing of, or some circumstances we are none of us acquainted with; but whatever it is, to me these things seem very ill conducted.'"[1]

Her own efforts among the members, when votes of censure were toward, were unsparing. A vigorous attempt was just then being made to inquire into the South Sea liquidations, which were still going on, upon the system arranged twelve years before by Walpole, the object of the inquiry being merely to inculpate the minister. Another motion was made, that, in order to prevent the dismissal of officers for political reasons, their commands should become permanent. It was on this occasion that the Earl of Scarborough, one of George's favourite servants, dumbfounded every one by insisting upon laying down his office of Master of the Horse, that he might not be suspected of yielding to court influences when he gave—as a practical soldier—an emphatic speech and vote against the resolution. In vain the King begged him to remain, and their parting (says the derisive Hervey) "was so tender that they embraced like equals and wept like lovers." A sense of honour so remarkable must, Walpole felt, be *rewarded* as soon as possible with a better post. The Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland he considered the proper thing; and with some difficulty persuaded the Queen to consent to allow her staunch friend, the Duke of Dorset, to be re-

[1] Hervey, vol. ii.

moved. But before the Dorsets, who had little of the customary vanity of great nobles, were spoken to about the transfer, it was mentioned to Scarborough, who a second time amazed the minister and the sovereigns by an absolute refusal, saying that he would not quit an employment one year to take a better one the next. "But what was more extraordinary still than Lord Scarborough's refusal of this great post," he never told anybody of its being offered to him; so that the Duke of Dorset never knew that he was to have been superseded.

Save for a few rare instances of disinterestedness, such as Scarborough, the Dorsets, or Speaker Onslow displayed, the royal court must have been strange to the practice of honesty. The Duchess of Dorset was even friendly enough to resign her office of Mistress of the Robes in order to set it free for Caroline to bestow on Mrs. Howard, whose husband's succession to the earldom of Suffolk rendered it improper for her to remain in the modest situation of Woman of the Bedchamber. Onslow, who was chosen Speaker in the Parliament of 1734, had a high esteem for the Queen, which was reciprocated. She wanted him to accept of some office in the Household, as Compton had done when Speaker—practically a sinecure—but Onslow refused; he, too, would not permit suspicion to sully his good name.

It was unfortunate but inevitable that the conduct of the Government should depend so largely on personal details. The sovereigns were of necessity identified with the ruling section and the all-powerful minister. The constitution still retained "the king's minister," but had by no means yet evolved "his Majesty's opposition." Under the conditions of those times probably nothing else was possible. Scarcely any one served the State but for the sake of reward, or at all events, after serving the State a definite reward was expected, as due. It was this shameless temper of English politicians which made

George II complain that in Hanover he paid people for doing their duty, in England, for neglecting it. Hervey, never able to see the sarcasm in the King's criticisms of England, said that it was the small scale of salaries in Hanover which made him think every one in England overpaid, and led him to bestow the favours dragged out of him by the minister with so ill a grace. But the King disapproved of the system, which, besides, nearly always made him uncomfortable: "You are always teasing me to do things that are disagreeable to me, and for people I dislike," he complained, with much justice.

Scarborough's resignation cost him some thousands a year, for two Peers at once claimed the post, and to provide compensation for the disappointed one a third personage had to be enticed out of his place of £5,000 a year by a peerage and a pension of £3,000. Hervey's only comment is, how mean it was of the King to "save the money" by making the new pensioner Lord Privy Seal when occasion offered.

Walpole thought it really outrageous of the King to refuse to make promotions in the army upon political grounds. Walpole grumbled to Hervey that though he could have *obliged* ever so many people in that way, the King persisted in regarding promotions as a military question, and roundly told Sir Robert that he knew nothing of troops: "You want always to have me disoblige all my old soldiers. . . . I will order my army as I think fit; for your scoundrels of the House of Commons you may do as you please."

During this epoch of political intrigue certain simple and useful steps were being taken by government towards a mitigation of the universal lawlessness. These, not exciting political outcry, offered little danger, and therefore engaged the Queen in no active participation, but the efforts took their rise in an adventure of her own.

Not long after the accession the Queen had accepted

an invitation to supper in the City, and it was known that her return would be private. A party of highwaymen actually lay in wait to rob her in St. Paul's Churchyard. "Fortunately" an Alderman, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, M.P., happened to pass first, and the thieves were so busy rifling his coach that her Majesty's "luckily passed" by them unobserved.[1] The incident flung George II into an ardent rage, the Secretary of State communicated with the magistrates, who exerted themselves remarkably, numbers of footpads were caught and executed, and the streets in a short time became almost cleared of them. A little later the Corporation went to Parliament for powers to levy a rate for lighting the streets at night with lamps and to fence off footpaths from the coach-way with posts; and they next proceeded to appoint a larger number of properly equipped Beadles and Constables. The actual condition of the pavements, however, long remained a danger, and the King and Queen, themselves, were, in 1730, overturned in their coach on the way from Kew to St. James's, the wind having blown out the servants' flambeaux.

These necessary and belated measures were succeeded by other attempts to cope with the causes of the terrible lawlessness of the capital, but as the beginnings were only tentative and not supported by any provision of force, the experiments made in legislating against the shocking abundance and cheapness of *gin*[2] provoked riots remarkable for ferocity. Scotland had been agitated in a somewhat similar manner by the malt-tax (which is said to have changed the national beverage of that country from ale to whisky). The opposition thundered against the wickedness of the anti-gin laws, which, as they included rum also, would certainly destroy the sugar industry and ruin the West Indies. So that when

[1] "Survey of London" (1728).

[2] *Cf.* Hogarth's pictures, painted at this epoch.

George II went to Hanover in 1736 he left a very disorderly kingdom under the Queen's sceptre.[1]

George II went to Hanover every two or three years, and always left his wife sole Regent. In 1729, 1732, 1735, and 1736-7 she thus openly held the reins of power for months together.

It was during her last regency that the famous "Porteous Riot" took place at Edinburgh which, with its parliamentary sequel, cost Caroline so much indignation and effort. The story of the two dare-devil smugglers is well known. The populace made heroes of them, and the magistrates of Edinburgh required Captain Porteous to take the command of the town guard for the day of the execution, and ordered him to provide his men with three charges of ammunition. After the execution of the one smuggler who did not escape the assembled mob assaulted the executioner and troops with showers of stones, and some of the older soldiers fired. A few rioters were hurt, and a tumult threatened, but Porteous extricated his men from the winding streets and went to report the events to the magistrates, at the rendezvous they had assigned to him, in a tavern. But the mob had preceded him, and the magistrates ordered him into arrest as a murderer, and had him tried before a jury of townsmen. The Captain was unpopular in Edinburgh because he interfered with the street riots, and "used sometimes when he had the opportunity to chastise them very severely with his cane." The jury declared him guilty of murder, and the magistrate condemned him to execution.[2] This was too much for the sense of justice of the gentry of the

[1] The newspapers blamed the cowardice of the public for the general disorder: "Every highway is now become a field of danger, and a gentleman's appearing without arms in a place when danger is suspected really looks as if he did not provide himself with arms for fear he should be called upon to make use of them." ("Political State of Great Britain," 1732).

[2] 20th July, 1736.

Scottish kingdom, who at once forwarded a largely signed petition to Queen Caroline to show mercy. The Queen "though her natural disposition was all mercy, yet would not rashly pardon the criminal, but was graciously pleased to grant a reprieve for six weeks that in the interim she might have opportunity to inquire more narrowly how far the prisoner was a proper object for royal clemency." The reprieve was about to expire, and it was supposed that the unlucky Captain would be *only* transported. But the mob had fixed on 7th September as the evening for his execution. A host of persons had known this for days, and the gaoler of the prison was told in the morning, but the magistrates took no other step to protect Porteous than agreeing to meet together, again in a neighbouring tavern. The crowd mustered without hindrance and in organized fashion, attacked the guard-house, and took the weapons from the dozen soldiers there without meeting resistance. When arrived at the prison, they found the door could not be hammered down, so they began to burn it, and when a hole was burned the turnkey felt it only wise to hand the keys through it. Thus Porteous was reached with perfect ease, dragged out, and amid ribald insults hanged by a rope slung over a dyer's pole. From their tavern the magistrates essayed to address the mob, but were silenced by a shower of stones to "the utmost danger of their lives."

No troops were on the spot. Messages went from the Corporation to a colonel, from the colonel to a major-general, and from him to the nearest Justiciary, two or three miles off, who alone could give legal authority for action, but Porteous was murdered long before any reply could come.

This extraordinary triumph of mob rule made the Queen very angry; she felt that not only her own authority but the discipline of government was set at open

defiance, and as disorder was rife all over the kingdom the example was a dangerous one. In London the trained bands and the Horse Guards of Whitehall had had to be called out, and in some country districts, where no one ventured to face the penalties threatening the man who ordered out troops, mob rule had lasted for weeks. Nevertheless, the prime minister hesitated in the vindication of authority, for the magistracy of Edinburgh were under the aegis of Lord Islay, and him he could neither disavow nor offend. Instantly the opposition seized on the chance of injuring the ministry in the name of the dignity of the Queen and of order, and a vigorous treatment of the city of Edinburgh was advocated in the House of Peers by all the enemies of Islay and Argyll, for whom, it was shrewdly suspected, her Majesty had no particular liking, until the Queen, seeing that the ministry would be attacked, began to consider the vindication of her authority in Edinburgh a secondary matter. The King had returned before, in 1737, the inquiry began. But, to the surprise of many individuals, although the royal speech opening parliament begged that their attention might be given "to consider to what height those audacious proceedings may rise," which were obstructing justice everywhere, violating the peace and levelling sedition against both King and parliament, yet the Queen no longer showed any of the fervour against the disobedient northern capital which she had before openly expressed. The story ran that she had vowed she would turn Edinburgh into a deer-forest, whereupon Argyll made a deep bow and requested leave to go into his own country "to get my hounds ready," a threat which caused her to moderate her views at once. But the tale rests on insufficient authority.

Although in alliance with Walpole and a member of the ministry, the Duke of Newcastle was a bitter enemy of Islay, and prominent, therefore, among the vindicators

of Law. The Queen sent for him and spoke out clearly. She "schooled him very severely" with "what the devil signifies all this bustle about the Scotch judges?" Would worrying them, she asked, be any satisfaction to the King for the murder which had taken place, or bring the real offenders to justice? She told the Duke that she saw through him perfectly: "You hate Lord Islay and you want to take this occasion to do disagreeable things to him and make it impossible for him to carry on the King's business in Scotland." Newcastle must understand that his Majesty would never permit an ill scheme to be worked upon so good a servant as Islay had been, and she hoped to "have no more of this childish fiddle-faddle silly work." As she expressed it in graver mood, "The business of princes is to make *the whole* go on, and not to encourage or suffer little silly, impertinent, personal piques between their servants to hinder the business of the government being done."

Caroline's representations restrained Newcastle while the government gradually whittled down the sweeping proposals for punishment into a pension for Porteous's widow, and the inquiry died away with no ill effects to Islay or his clients. Caroline commented good-humouredly to Hervey on this impotent conclusion, telling him that he and Sherlock, the Bishop of Salisbury, had converted her, by turns, to their opposite opinions as to the treatment to be meted out to the Scotch judges: "and since the more I hear, the more I am puzzled, I am resolved I will hear no more about it, but, let them be in the right or the wrong, I own to you I am glad they are gone." It was her way of yielding the immediate question for the sake of the larger issue, the unshaken credit of the ministry.

These and other debates had caused the session to be a very long one. Nothing was done to create better order in the country, of course, but many struggles had

been waged over personalities, pensions and peerages. Hervey, like others, had been worrying the King to bestow "something" on two or three individuals whom he "protected," and the King, as usual, had shown a grudging spirit towards these interested or political recommendations. At last their Majesties got away to the peace of Richmond, and when some one made the conventional inquiry, whether his Majesty was not glad to get into the fresh air again, George snapped out: "Yes, my Lord, I am very glad to be got away, for I have seen of late in London so many hungry faces every day that I was afraid they would have ate me at last."

It was, in all probability, Caroline's large sense of the dignity of the monarchy, combined with a fear of letting loose the forces of disruption by any division within the ranks of the supporters of the monarchy, which kept her from forwarding George II's plans for separating Hanover from England. He would have liked to see Hanover settled on his younger son, and Caroline cannot but have sympathized on that point, but she was also aware that, although some of the leading statesmen would regard such a separation as "a message from Heaven," and popular as the actual step would be with the nation, it would open the floodgates of party faction. The Emperor must be conciliated in Germany, the Prince of Wales in England, and to have the subject touched upon at all in Parliament, as it certainly must be, the King would consider, she said, a great insult. She would not have the royal prestige lowered by Parliament, Prince, or Emperor, and therefore, though she never explained her true sentiments, even to Hervey, it may be gathered that she did not think that the time would ever, in her lifetime, arrive when such a disposition could be made without danger to "the whole going on."

The Queen became much less popular with the common

people as her active participation in the government became realized, and her exercise of the powers of Regent made this very clear. She cared little, however, for popularity with the masses. They might be disagreeable in a riot, but they had not votes, and she courted rather the good opinion of those who could affect politics. During the King's absence she continued to keep up the attractions of court life, held drawing-rooms twice a week, gave a stag-hunt in Richmond New Park at least once in the week, and managed to invest conventional ceremonies, such as receiving petitions or accepting the greetings or farewells of ambassadors, with a courteous grace which made such ceremonies distinctly less irksome during her regency than when the dull King himself was present. In 1732 George was abroad when the eleventh anniversary of his and Caroline's accession was celebrated, and the nobles in London, and loyal gentlemen in many other places, seized the opportunity for magnificently intimating their loyal appreciation of at least one of their sovereigns.

It was characteristic of him that the Prince of Wales, at such times, though he never openly misbehaved, used to be as rude, privately, to his mother as he could: on one occasion he pretended to accompany her to Hampton Court, but stopped short at Kew; on another, he ostentatiously waited until her commission of regency had been read before coming in late to the Council chamber at Kensington; on other occasions he would come to Council so late that all the business was finished, and the like. The newspaper reports of the day show that he, at all events, was not above currying favour with the mob, and if he gave an entertainment he was pretty sure to roast a whole ox "for the poor," and order quantities of barrels of beer to be broached for them "to drink healths." The Queen contemptuously said that Fritz's popularity turned her sick. She herself never "posed,"

and even, says an admirer, "neglected appearances so much that she used to say that 'her character would never be known till after her death.'"[1] This did not mean that she neglected courtesy to any. Caroline's occasional rudenesses were all calculated. To make up for the King's want of gracious manners, she accustomed her daughters to help her, in correspondence and in conversation, to dispense the little politenesses which made the social atmosphere easy. She had an unerring memory, not only for faces, but for little details of their family or circumstances which delighted her visitors.

"Mama's unwillingness to disappoint the genteel reception always met with at Clermont," writes the Princess Anne for her to the Duke of Newcastle, one day, "mak's her lay her commands upon me to let you know that neither she nor Papa will be able to go there to-morrow. Mama recommends herself aux excellents Pâtés, s'il est permis avec un peu moins du poivre." The Queen was appreciative of the pleasures of the table, and would accept little presents of fine fruit, and the like, from the courtiers sometimes.

Newcastle is an extreme instance of the royal tolerance. George II never liked him, and it is hard to imagine that anybody could, but he made himself necessary to Walpole, therefore he must be not merely tolerated, but flattered. The princesses were taught to treat him, like Walpole's brother Horace, as an intimate friend, and Emily would write him notes on matters personal and political, but particularly personal, by his nickname of "Permis." He apparently had a trick of beginning his speech with "Est-il permis."

[1] Alured Clarke.

CHAPTER XI

DOMESTIC LIFE

HOW Caroline found the time to give so much attention to such different spheres of interest as politics, literature, and theology, remains a mystery, for the King absorbed always the major part of her day. The royal pair lived a regularly ordered life, and were continually together, and no doubt the more so because, for the ten years before they came to the throne, they had been deprived of their elder children, and relegated to a practical seclusion by George I. The result of this was that by the time George II became King his opinions and habits were rigidly formed. He was very like his father in his contentment with a steady routine of life. The regular changes of his household from St. James's to Kensington, from Kensington to Hampton Court, and thence now and again to Richmond, satisfied the need for change of air and house, and his sojourns in Hanover every three years formed his holiday.

Caroline, therefore, was never able to travel about her kingdom, which she possibly would have liked to do; she seems to have been expected to visit Bath in 1733, but apparently never went, though the hopeful poets of the place had composed and printed their welcomes to the whole royal family.[1] Hanover she does not seem ever to have wished to revisit. Indeed she had few

[1] That Her Majesty's chairman *slipped* provided a whole sheaf of verse.

pleasant memories connected with the place, and the petty scale of court life there, with all the wearisome punctilio and personal jealousies of a small principality, she regarded with absolute aversion.

When the death of George I brought the Princesses Anne, Emily, and Caroline into the intimacy of home life with their parents at last, they found the increased activity of the domestic life of St. James's rather trying at first—always, it seemed, publicity and politeness to be endured. Nor did they at once take kindly to their father's rigorous form of exercise, stag-hunting, though they were not immediately plunged into everything, but wisely allowed time to get accustomed to new ways. They brought critical eyes to study their father, and Anne and Emily would become exasperated by his tiresome chatter, and resent his inconsiderate absorption of their mother. But to her they became devoted. Quickly they caught up her views, and imitated her practices towards great and small. They accompanied her on her walks; Emily the active especially liked the long "promenades" of a summer evening, "long, quite round Bushy." They learned, too, or Emily and Caroline at all events did, the art of cheerful renunciation. As for having any share in the diversions made on account of their brother Frederick's arrival, "it is a thing impossible, either one is at charge to the people, or they forget all manner of common civility," wrote Emily in January, 1729, to her dear Lady Portland.[1] And they found it rather tiresome.

"Papa and Mamma," she writes in August, 1728, "are gone again to Richmond as the custom proves to be every Wednesday and Saturday. We stay them days comfortably at home [*i.e.* Kensington Palace] and rest. You know that comfort one hath not often with them drawing-rooms." On these hunts the King and

[1] Several letters are preserved in the B.M., Egerton MS. 1710.

most of the company galloped on horseback, while Caroline drove in her chaise, Lord Hervey riding by her side on a steed she always provided for him, that he might entertain her with his conversation, "whilst other people were entertaining themselves with hearing dogs bark and seeing crowds gallop," says that superior gentleman.

But soon the two princesses ventured to join in the alarming sport, Anne hunting so violently that she frightened her sister (who became a very good horsewoman), "p.s.—we are just come back from hunting in good health," the return in safety was for some time noted in her letters as a surprise to be thankful for.

Oddly enough, though George was so keen a stag-hunter, he had nothing but contempt for fox-hunting and for the general exodus to the country at the hunting season. It was all very proper for Sir Robert Walpole, he would admit, who required some relaxation for *his* mind; but "a pretty occupation," he growled to the Duke of Grafton, was it "for a man of quality and at his age to be spending all his time in tormenting a poor fox that was generally a much better beast than any of those that pursued him." "With your great corps of twenty stone weight, no horse, I am sure, can carry you within hearing, much less within sight of your hounds."

When at Hampton Court, which was the headquarters of the royal family for the summer half of the year, Caroline led a very out-of-door life. She and the King would often breakfast in the garden with nobody but Hervey in attendance. Her invariable breakfast was chocolate, sometimes with fruit. Then she used to walk in the gardens with the King, unless it was a hunting day, while the elder princesses would take exercise on horseback until about eleven, when, primed by this time with all Hervey's latest gossip, the Queen would go in

to "dress" and hold a morning drawing-room, while the King held a levée, both sparsely attended save by the regular members of the Household, for only assiduous courtiers or very active young ladies would take so long a coach journey or lodge themselves "in Hampton town"; and this made it the easier for Caroline to interview the intelligent people in whose talk she took a real pleasure, or to have eccentric characters brought to be seen—a peasant-poet, perhaps, or a learned woman who studied Hebrew and Anglo-Saxon, or an Irish authoress. Queer "mixed company," sneers the superior Hervey, was often to be found at these drawing-rooms. He supposed her Majesty wanted to air an affectation of universal knowledge.

At 3 o'clock they went to dinner, which lasted some two hours, and after that the Queen liked to walk for an hour with her children, attended by an equerry or two, or a few ardent courtiers. "So that (writes one of them) if I was not master of my resolution of never taking a drop a wine too much at that table I have no opportunity to do it, for tho' I can't walk so fast as the Queen and the little ones I am and will be always there to see them set out, and linger in the Garden near home to see them come in and set down to play in the Drawing Room . . . *if I don't make something of it at last I shall have hard fate.*" So much for Mr. Equerry Wentworth's loyal devotion.

Driving would sometimes take the place of walking, or the Queen would divert herself with hearing reading aloud, or singing. They were a musical family, Anne, the clever daughter, being the best performer. Händel was her master, and used to accompany the singing on the harpsichord; and of his music the King and all the royal family were steady admirers. As a sort of counter-blast to the "Beggar's Opera" style of song, Lord Hervey would sometimes find, and sometimes himself

compose, comic political songs, which amused her Majesty a good deal. She would sing them as duets with him—"And how agreeably and good humerd'ly the Queen sings them!" She enjoyed a spice of malice, and one day called up Sir Robert Walpole's daughter, Lady Malpas, to hear a new ballad on her father and his rival Pulteney, which her Majesty found so funny that she afterwards sang it to Sir Robert himself: "The joke is, that Sir Robert had the *cord* the Ranger wears, and 'tis supposed one day Mr. Pulteney may have another sort of cord."[1] She had a robust sense of humour and a dignified good nature which caused her to ignore paltry sneers at herself. In 1729 she not only read Pope's "Dunciad," but allowed it to be formally presented to herself and the King.

Halley, the astronomer, also experienced her patronage, and if she sometimes bestowed patronage upon a poetaster who had less worth than conceit, such as the self-taught peasant Stephen Duck, this occurred but seldom compared with her constant acts of quiet generosity to those who did deserve help. She kept her benefactions almost unknown, partly from delicacy to the recipients; one instance may be given, perhaps a type of many.[2] A certain learned lady, Mrs. (properly Miss) Elstob, a great antiquarian and Anglo-Saxon scholar, was reduced to a state of extreme poverty upon the death of her brother, an Oxford student, in whose learned publications his sister had shared. Mrs. Chapone indited an epistle to the Queen to ask for her help for the poor scholar, and got it conveyed by friends into the hands of the young Duke of Cumberland (frequently a channel to his parents in this kind of communication). He promised to read it to his mother, and she, much impressed, asked him "when *he* should be able to write such a letter"; he answered honestly "Never." "The

[1] P. Wentworth, August, 1731. [2] Mrs. Delany, vol. i.

Queen said she never in her life read a better letter; that it had touched her heart, and ordered immediately an hundred pounds for Mrs. Elstob, and said she 'need never fear a necessitous old age whilst she lived, and that when she wanted more, to ask for it, and she should have it.' I think this was acting like a Queen" cries young Mrs. Pendarves, "and ought to be known, though she ordered that it should not be spoken of, because she has many demands of this kind that it is not possible for her to satisfy."

In the same way was her generous thoughtfulness exercised at a distance. When her brother, the Margrave of Ansbach, died, it was Caroline who charged herself with the education of his infant son, and directed it herself. What endeared her so much to all who thus came once in contact with her was not merely her generosity, but the attention she gave to each individual case. She appeared to enter into the circumstances, and, as was frequently observed by persons of very different positions, would speak to each one as suitably as if she had little else to do but to consider them, or was naturally acquainted with their sphere of life. Her sympathies must have been extraordinarily quick. Apparently it was in politics only that the assumption of a sort of Stewart "king-craft" was a temptation to her. Her court she ruled with a kindly consideration that never tolerated any liberty. "There was no Peeress or peeress's daughter who was ill-treated by either father or husband who did not seek redress at her hands."[1] On the single occasion when a gossiping letter from Lady Hervey lets us see the maids of honour behaving with indiscretion at Kensington, where they had annoyed sundry of the palace residents by going about in the garden at night, tapping at their windows, and finally by coming to be secretly let in in that manner, she adds,

[1] Margravine of Ansbach. "Memoirs," vol. i.

that "it is really very well that others had more good nature than these fine ladies, and could prevail on themselves not to tell the queen of this."

Her kindness endured steadily, as Mary Bellenden knew. When Mary's father-in-law died, leaving his large family but ill provided for, their friends began to bestir themselves to get some provision in the then usual fashion of a charge on the public purse; but it proved to be unnecessary. Lord Islay found that "the business" was already done, "and that in the handsomest manner imaginable. I have reason to believe the Queen has prevented all applications either from the family or their competitors, by declaring her intentions to support the distressed."[1]

In the quiet retreat of Richmond one of the few pleasures the Queen could have was to summon interesting people sometimes to come to visit her. The learned Whiston she esteemed very highly, and would usually have him to spend a day or two with her and please her with his manly conversation. She once[2] asked him what people in general said about her. Whiston replied "that they justly esteemed her as a Lady of great abilities, a Patron of learned men, and a kind friend to the poor. . . . 'But (says she) no one is without faults; pray what are mine?' Mr. Whiston begged to be excused speaking on that subject, but she insisting, he said, 'Her Majesty did not behave with proper reverence at Church.' She replied 'The King would talk with her.' He said, 'A greater than Kings was then only to be regarded.' She acknowledged it, and confessed her fault. 'Pray (says she) tell me what is my next.' He replied, 'When I hear your Majesty has amended of that fault, I will tell you of your next.' So it ended."

[1] Suffolk Letters, vol. i.

[2] John Whiston in Nichol's "Literary Anecdotes," vol. i.

It goes without saying that Caroline's household was carefully ordered. A comparison of a salary list for the princely household for the year 1717, and one for the Queen's own household at her death in 1737, shows that a large proportion of her servants remained with her through life, and that the places when they fell vacant were usually filled by members of the same families. Herveys, Selwyns, Campbells, Claytons, Bellendens, Lumleys, continue to fill the list. Wages were never raised, but were ample, considering the scale of those times, especially for the humbler domestics. "Necessary women" remained at £56 and £34. A woman who cleaned got £46, to include her "mopps." Another who cleaned the house in Leicester Fields had only £15. This was in 1717, and remained much the same twenty years later.

The Queen's regular personal attendant, Mrs. Purcell, figures as seamstress, and was with her from the first establishment of a separate household for their royal highnesses. After 1727 the scale of service was, of course, considerably increased, the Queen having a separate staff of both nobles and menials. This permitted the retention of all those who had been members of the princely household, as well as the addition of a large number of George I's officials. Grantham remained the Queen's Chamberlain at the original salary (£1,200), Grafton was the King's. When she became Queen, Caroline did not, however, increase largely the number of her ladies; six Maids of honour, eight Ladies and six Women of the Bedchamber appear; but the Maids' salaries were increased from £200 to £300 per annum, and their "dividend of the clothes" must have been worth more.

Among the domestics the kitchen staff was the largest, and these are all assigned to the King's list. There were but very few Germans, almost all of them being

George's own body servants; at their head his Master of the Robes, Augustus Schutz, whom Hervey derides so impatiently for his dull chatter; his salary was not extravagant, only £400. Hervey, as a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, had had £600. The number of watermen, as compared with the coachmen, suggests that they are a survival from times when water traject was even more usual than in the eighteenth century. The King had eighteen, and the Queen fourteen, besides the Bargemaster, but they were only paid a sort of retaining fee of 3 guineas.

Of sinecures there are far fewer than might be expected from the example of George I. In the Queen's household only her Master of the Horse was assigned a clerk to do all the business, but the Laundress's place was, like that of the King's Seamstress, treated as a sinecure; £200 was allowed for it, whereof one Mrs. Crow hath £100, "and a German who does the work" the other £100. This Mrs. Crow actually tried to claim her pension for the year 1715-16, before the princely household was established. The Mistress of the Robes (the Duchess of Dorset, from 1717 to 1731) had no set duties to perform, but she was constantly in waiting, like a permanent member of the family, and appeared upon state occasions; the Ladies, Women, and Maids took turns of waiting, but would often exchange with each other, for mutual convenience, with her Majesty's permission, and occasionally Caroline would request one or another to stay with her for some definite reason, even out of turn, and this they regarded as an honour.

In the royal nursery equal regularity prevailed. Baroness Gemmingen died in 1723, and soon after their accession the King and Queen named good Lady Portland governess to the youngest princesses. The resentments of the Prince of Wales were not continued into his reign as King, and Caroline had learned the merits

of the Countess's character. She was assisted by Lady Charlotte de Roucy, who was the resident companion of the princesses, a French lady, daughter of an emigrant Huguenot. And Lady Charlotte thus formed a regular member of the Household, and certainly had a regular salary, whatever Hervey may say, in his sneering style, of her poverty. But Mrs. Howard (to give Lady Suffolk the name she bore during nearly the whole of her court career) appears to have been practically in charge of the children's establishment when they were once out of "the cradle nursery." She found[1] that their petty expenses, such as "tuning the harpsichord, food for their birds, and many other little things belonging to their royal highnesses [the Duke of Cumberland, Mary and Louisa], which was [a] little too trifling to mention," came to £50 a year. Every two years they had a fresh set of linen under-clothes, and the old were given away as perquisites to the attendants. These consisted of a tire-woman and a tailor, a housemaid, and a page of the back stairs for the little Duke of Cumberland, while to the little princesses were assigned, besides two gentleman-ushers (practically sinecure posts except for a little court attendance), and two pages of honour, a dresser (or lady's-maid) who had £50 a year, and a chamber-maid.

The little girls usually wore long handsome coats and stiff petticoats spread over a hoop. The materials were rich; damask, brocade, velvet, silk "flowered" or embroidered, and linen at 10*s*. the ell, and the cost was considerable, especially of the lace, which was then so fashionable and so beautiful. Caroline herself sent orders to particular lace-women in Bath or elsewhere, and paid £20 to £60 for the lace-trimmed suit of bibs, apron, cap, and ruffles which her children wore when they were tiny, sometimes "very fine intire lace suits" for birth-

[1] Letters of Lady Suffolk [1824], Appendix. The Royal Nursery.

days. It is noted that this fine lace was not always bestowed, as a perquisite, on the attendants.

There was neither waste nor ostentation in the Queen's household, which caused a few idle people to accuse her of stinginess. Separate accounts and stores for household purposes were not kept for the royal children, they "used the queen's coaches, footmen, and grooms"; their coffee, tea, chocolate, and sugar were sent, as wanted, from the Queen's back stair room, and fire and candles from the King's offices. In the cradle nursery wet-nurse, dry-nurse and rocker and one footman were held sufficient, without dressers or other menservants.

The rapid rise of prices which was observed about the middle of the century had not set in during Queen Caroline's life, so that the allowance for clothes, wages, and other things, too, could and did continue exactly the same, year after year. Thus, when the young princesses were growing up, they had sixteen dozen pairs of gloves allowed for the year, at 18*s.* the dozen; fans cost about 8 guineas a year, less than would be expected, remembering how necessary they were, and how every new fancy or discovery was reflected by a new fashion in fans. On the other hand, they had a new pair of shoes every week, at 6*s.* 6*d.* a pair, "raised to 7*s.* before I [Lady Suffolk] left St. James's." Her majesty's slippers cost "with gold 24*s.*, with silver 21*s.*, Persians 30*d.*" Ribbons and artificial flowers, too, "were very tryfling articles in my time which are not so now."

The absence of much remark about *washing* has sometimes led to sneers from the cleanly modern critic, so it is as well to mention that there was a royal house-laundress who gave out clean table-linen, towels, etc., once a week, and that the King and the Queen had each their own laundress and, besides, paid for the washing of the children's clothes and for the regular cleaning of their apartments. Though there were not many chamber

and necessary women on the household staff, this does not mean that nothing was brushed; footmen did a great deal of the housework, and they were a small host. The payment for *washing* of the Duke and his two younger sisters came to £90 a year, but then it included "the laces [*i.e.*, as of stays], bandboxes, Maydew, brushes, patches, combs, quilted caps, pins, powder, paper, wax, and several odd things" which amounted to some £40; "paste for hands and pomatum came from the apothecary."

If we may assume that the lessons of the princesses Mary and Louisa, when under Lady Portland's direction, followed the scheme she had before laid down for their elder sisters, we must believe that they led a studious life, and, like the fashionable youths of that epoch, had to work with real application to master the accomplishments their reputation for which was no courtly make-believe. A fragment of a day's routine for one of the princesses (probably Anne), drawn up in bad French on 9th June, 1723, directs that she shall rise at 7, pray, "coiffe," and breakfast; 8-9, walk; 9-10, read; 10-11, read aloud with la Quenault (her French mistress, evidently) and make observations upon what she had been reading alone; 11-12, learn by heart; 12-1, Prayers; 1-2, Dinner; 2-3, play at shuttlecock or walk, talking about sensible things; 3-4, work while la Quenault reads; 4-5, practise on the clavecin or read, and then "play with Hendel"; 6.30, walk if it is fine. . . .[1]

The princesses Mary and Louisa were still in the schoolroom when their mother died, and were not brought forward into society by her while they were children. But it is clear that she saw them regularly and was concerned for their education. At Hampton Court they used to walk with her in the gardens daily, and apparently at Kensington were often with her in the gardens and on

[1] B.M., Egerton MS. 1700.

the river. The Duke of Cumberland, slightly older, was constantly with his mother in her private hours. He, of course, had separate tutors and servants from early boyhood.

The daily round of life at "dull" Richmond and Hampton Court has already been described.

More ceremonial had to be observed when the court was in London, and life, of course, was far more public. St. James's Palace was rather small for George's family, every room was occupied, and the crowding was inconvenient. For this and other reasons both George and Caroline infinitely preferred Kensington, where Caroline had the particular pleasure of being able to re-model the gardens to her own taste.

She was extremely fond[1] of planting and adorning the royal parks and gardens, and Hyde Park, St. James's, Kensington, and Richmond (the Old Park) all owe something to her good taste. Bridgman and Kent were both employed by her upon judicious alterations, as well as "Capability" Brown. Every year she would add something. She it was who practically created the Serpentine, by giving to that sheet of water a curving instead of a rectilineal form. She took 300 acres from Hyde Park to form a better garden for Kensington, and ventured to enclose it,[2] and here she kept interesting little animals, such as squirrels, and the tortoises the Doge of Venice sent her. Here she had a greenhouse erected and filled with oranges and lemons—perhaps a reminiscence of Herrenhausen—and if it was her example which helped to make planting trees so fashionable a pursuit with the wealthy gentry, many parts of England

[1] *Cf.* Pyne's Royal Residences.

[2] Is this the origin of the famous tale told impartially of Caroline, George II, and George I, one or all of whom asked what it would cost to enclose St. James's Park, "Only 3 crowns," being the stinging reply?

which she never beheld owe her a debt of gratitude. To one quaint gardening fashion of the time she certainly gave an impetus, and that was the rage for making *grottoes*. She built an extremely elaborate one at Richmond in the Old Park, which she used as a library; she filled it with an excellent selection of books, and had a librarian for it, the over-rated and fortunate Stephen Duck. She amused herself by placing there fancy figures of Merlin and famous ancients, for whom members of her court served as models, and called it "Merlin's Cave." Subsequently she enlarged her collection, and placed there "bustoes" of Locke, Boyle, Newton, Woolaston,[1] Dr. Clarke, and others, and desired to have suitable Latin mottoes for them composed "by the fine genius's of the nation."

The progress of this and her other fancy buildings was mentioned as a topic of the day in the journals, and the loyal "Gentleman's Magazine" could hardly pass a month without a set of complimentary verses to her Majesty, while so alert were the opposition wits in discovering excuses for sneering at the Queen that this harmless, and indeed intellectual, diversion of hers was represented as a scandalous folly and waste of money, and she was taunted with making an ostentation of learning and display of bad taste. Though why the style of a grotto should be less appropriate to a library than the style of a Grecian temple or a Gothic church is hard to see.

The Queen had a second library in the Green Park, where she would go to read sometimes when in town.

Kensington was Caroline's usual home when the King was abroad, as being less formal than St. James's, and yet convenient for business, as well as being in fresh air and on the edge of the country. There every Sunday

[1] Whose "Religion of Nature delineated" she said she had thrice read through.

after chapel she held court, when regent; when the King was at home there was court on every day except Sunday, chapel, attended in state, then taking the place of levée.

When Caroline's health became in her later years less robust, Kensington Gardens were large enough to afford her the walks she loved, and in them she made various improvements. At the south-east corner she had a "Mount" raised and planted with evergreens, and on the top was set an arbour made to turn upon a pivot,[1] so that she might sit, sheltered from the wind, and see the beautiful prospect of the "new river," *i.e.*, the Serpentine, and the green open country beyond the broad Thames. Walking exercise was often supplemented by an airing on the river; and the royal bargemaster, Mr. Hill, used to come daily for his orders. Her own apartments in Kensington palace Caroline furnished to suit her own taste. They seem to have consisted of the drawing-room, with its fine painted ceiling, a small private dining-room, a closet (or study), and the Queen's Gallery—a long and rather plain apartment where she was fond of breakfasting among her children, while they all heard the current gossip from Hervey, or the chatter the King brought from his letters and newspapers. The royal family began their day early, and often despatched their correspondence before their late and simple breakfast. The King would, as a rule, stay with his wife in the gallery till at eleven o'clock he observed through the cane blinds the little ceremony of relieving the guard; then he would punctually go away to his "Dressing," where his more intimate servants, "who had the privilege of the Bedchamber," would attend as at a private levée.

Dinner was usually served in "the King's great dining-room," where the walls had been hung with the newly-invented *paper* hangings, "in imitation of velvet

[1] Described in "The Craftsman," No. 305, 1732, on *Chairs*.

flock," considered extremely handsome. The Queen's favourite pictures were not here but on the walls of her own rooms; among them being the fine set of Holbein's drawings of heads which she had herself the pleasure of discovering in a bureau in the palace. Her taste in pictures was admirable, and besides collecting miniatures, enamels, and fine china, she began to re-collect some of the scattered treasures of Charles I. Roubillac, then the foremost sculptor of the time, she employed to make the busts of herself and George II, which were put in her Library in the Green Park.

While the King was being dressed among his gentlemen (whether at St. James' or Kensington) Caroline was also being dressed in her court costume. The etiquette observed was based on that of Queen Anne, which Mrs. Howard ascertained, probably in obedience to Caroline's own direction, from Lady Masham, through their common friend Dr. Arbuthnot.[1] It was the rule for the bedchamber woman to bring to the Queen the basin of water for washing, and kneel with it, while the bedchamber lady looked on, for the page to be called to put on the shoes, and for the bedchamber woman to put on gloves and bring chocolate. Not that Caroline kept by any means to all the details of Anne's customs.[2]

While the dressing was proceeding amid conversation and jesting, not always of a refined nature, Morning Prayer was being read by the chaplains in the adjoining Chamber, and a door between was set open that the Queen might technically be present at divine service,

[1] H. Walpole's stories of Caroline's unpleasant inflictions of slights and mortifications upon Mrs. Howard are proved to be imaginary by Croker (Introduction to Suffolk Letters, 1824), except for the statement that she would address her as "my good Howard." Caroline, however, habitually addressed even Earls and Dukes as "my good ——," and the truth rather seems to be that Mrs. Howard often acted as a sort of confidential private secretary.

[2] Vol. i, p. 292.

though without inconvenience to her dressing and chat. This was the opportunity for her ladies to bring any plea for a friend in need; to introduce a book or a poem; to comment on a sermon, or repeat the latest scandal.

After dressing came the public Drawing-room, on Sundays replaced by Chapel; and after that Dinner, apparently about three o'clock, served as a rule in public. After dinner the King took a rest, which gave Caroline an opportunity of chatting with Hervey, or with other individuals, or going to read her books, or to visit some nobleman; and then came the semi-public evening, with its card-tables and conversation, in a number of rooms. High play was to be found at one table, low at another. Probably the King would not play, but would wander about his wife's or daughter's apartment; and after those who were not strictly members of the household had withdrawn he was apt to be extremely hard to entertain; always requiring (says Hervey) that other people's talk should be fresh though his own was always the same.

On opera nights, however, the Queen had some relief, for George loved Händel's music and would go to the royal box for the whole performance, sometimes accompanied by his daughters or the Duke of Cumberland. The whole family appreciated good music, and their patronage stood between Händel and the indifference of London. When George I died subscriptions to the operas had promptly ceased until it was seen that the new sovereign also went to operas; then the fashionable world subscribed anew, until the political manœuvres of Pulteney's party succeeded in involving music, like literature, in the vortex of faction, and Händel was deserted by the polite world, which showed its good taste by patronizing the *English* productions of Gay and Fielding, and every scurrilous specimen of comic opera and farce.

This led to an increasing desertion of music proper,

which provided the *bon-mot* of Chesterfield who, looking into the almost empty opera-house, instantly withdrew again, saying that it was not for him to disturb his sovereign's privacy.

A part of every evening which was not devoted to opera or to court reception George used to spend with Mrs. Howard, until her retirement from court in 1734. The habit had begun in the early years of Leicester House, and was continued with the dogged obstinacy of all the King's habits. He seemed to think his having done a thing one day an unanswerable argument for doing it the next, sneered Chesterfield. He certainly was extraordinarily wedded to routine, and would continue to visit Lady Suffolk, as she became in 1731, counting the minutes, with his watch in his hand, not to overstep the hour solemnly consecrated by long usage. This did not imply a continuance of his earlier affection. But to George it seemed as if the only way to stop the intercourse which now bored him was to let the lady retire from court. This she desired to do so soon as her husband's death in 1733 freed her from his claims for money; but the Queen refused at first to hear of her resignation. The King grumbled at this—"Why will you not let me part with an old deaf woman of whom I am tired?" But the Queen was in truth afraid that her husband would have resort to some less safe and amenable favourite. That was why she had asked the Duchess of Dorset, in 1731, to make way for Lady Suffolk, as Mistress of the Robes. "Out of the bedchamber, it seems, 'tis resolved she shall not go," commented the gossips. "And I hear she 's so well pleased that she hears better already." Lady Suffolk was timid, perhaps a little weak in resolution. She could not manage to insist on resigning when the Queen bade her stay, and laughed at her for having romantic notions in her head. If she would stop reading novels, quoth her Majesty, these

foolish ideas would leave her. At last the King so sharply snubbed his old mistress in public that she nerved herself to face Caroline,[1] saying, that if she had spoken to her with the harshness the King did she should never have dared to come into her presence again; and that these *public* marks of his displeasure must force her to leave the court. The Queen was sure it was the doing of "her enemies" working on the King: "You do not know a court!" Lady Suffolk feared that if twenty years had not taught her, nothing would. "Child, your enemies want to get you out, and *they* [her friends] will be the first to drop you; Oh, my dear Lady Suffolk, you don't know when you are out how different people will behave." "Sure, Madame, such [friends] are better lost than kept." But Caroline persisted in assuming that her Mistress of the Robes was being tricked into resigning by a set of designing persons unknown. The King would forgive her; she should be treated as kindly as the other ladies once in temporary favour, and now out of it—an assurance which both hurt and offended Lady Suffolk. "Child, you know the King; leave it to me. I will answer for it that all will be as well with you as with any of the ladys." But this time the Queen was powerless, and Lady Suffolk really went, endowed with the most slender little fortune, probably, that any royal favourite had received as a monarch's bounty after twenty years' devotion.

The immediate result was exactly what Caroline had feared. Unattracted by the very palpable wiles of Lady Deloraine the King betook himself to Hanover in 1735, as it was his year for going, and found there a new charmer. As if moved with some foreknowledge Walpole had pressed his Majesty to put off his holiday for a year, for the Polish Succession War was raging, and he

[1] Notes of a Conversation with the Queen in the Suffolk Papers. B.M. Addit. MS. 22627.

begged his Majesty to consider how ill it would look if he had to come "running back through Westphalia with 70,000 Prussians at his heels." To which his Majesty's sole reply was, not unnaturally, his favourite rejoinder—"Pooh! Stuff!"

Hervey thought the Queen could have kept him at home had she chosen, but that she did not want to lose her pleasant interim of regency. At all events, he went; and soon Caroline was regretful enough, for his own detailed letters explained to her in full that he was quite enslaved by the charms of young Madame de Walmoden, a Hanoverian lady, whose fair hair and complexion, small stature, and gentle temper suggest that her type of beauty was the same as Caroline's own had been. George II confided his amours to his wife exactly as he did every other matter, and counted upon exactly the same measure of sympathy. This extraordinary situation was known to and amazed the few who really were acquainted with the relations of the King and Queen.[1] It must suffice here to state the unpleasant fact. Caroline at least knew, or, up to the year 1735, had known that no rival ever robbed her of her husband's confidence, nor of her ascendancy over his mind; and to the, so to speak, superficial wanderings of his fancy she was lenient.

When October brought round the usual time for returning to England, the King insisted on making an extremely rapid journey. Starting on a Wednesday morning (22nd October) he covered the entire distance in a record time of four days, and reached Kensington on Sunday just after Chapel. The Queen got to the gate as he was alighting and first, with deep respect, kissed his hand, then they embraced, and the King ceremoniously led her up the stairs, and began to receive company at once; but everybody commented upon the

[1] *E.g.*, Lord Hervey, Sir R. Walpole, and Lord Chancellor King, *cf.* Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. iv, p. 633.

frigid nature of his conduct to the Queen, and in the two days they remained at Kensington he was incessantly scolding her, his children, and Lord Hervey. He was angry to find that some of the pictures had been altered, and, as his own taste was as bad as Caroline's was judicious, insisted on bringing back the old pictures from Windsor, whither, as to a genteel lumber-house, they had been sent, and on replacing the Van Dycks by "two signposts." It is on one of these mornings that Hervey remorselessly describes him coming in upon the breakfast party in the Gallery, and snubbing the Queen "for being always stuffing; the Princess Emily for not hearing him; the princess Caroline for being grown fat; the Duke of Cumberland for standing awkwardly, Lord Hervey for not knowing what relation the Prince of Sultzbach was to the Elector Palatine; and then carried the Queen to walk and be re-snubbed in the garden." The King had made himself ill by his violent journey, and dire was the distress of his unlucky court when he was ill, for his bad temper was vented upon all about him and especially upon his submissive wife, and at such times he was tyrannical enough, at all events, in language, and would find an excuse for rude scolding in every proceeding of the Queen.

At one time he would laugh at her gardening, and her Merlin's Cave. Another day he rebuked her for giving "vails" to people's servants in town when she visited them: his father, he declared, had never thrown away his money in that way. The Queen pleaded that she only did it because Lord Grantham said that it was proper. "Nobody but a fool (grumbled her husband) would take another fool's advice." The Queen appeals to Lord Hervey to know "whether it was not now as customary to give money in town as in the country? *He knew it was not, but said it was*"—to please the Queen. Then why, asks George, need she go at all? "You do not see

me running into every puppy's house to see his new chairs and stools, nor is it for *you* to be running your nose everywhere and trotting about the town to every fellow that will give you some bread and butter, like an old girl that loves to go abroad, no matter where, or whether it be proper or no." In vain Hervey tried to intervene with talk of his own, the King broke into a torrent of German, to which Caroline offered no reply, but "knotted on till she tangled her thread, then snuffed the candles that stood on the table before her, and snuffed one of them out; upon which the King, in English, began a new dissertation upon her Majesty, and took her awkwardness for his text."

These and similar vivid descriptions in Hervey's pages give us a clear understanding of the wearisome hours Caroline had occasionally to spend with "her tyrant," but it is too seldom remembered that these outbursts of rudeness took place only in the absolute privacy of the royal home life, and were hardly a matter of daily occurrence. Trying as they must have been, and they grew more frequent exactly as Caroline's health was beginning to fail, they were never inflicted upon her before any witness save that of her indignant children and of the young man whom she and her husband treated almost as a son (he was of just the same age as their own estranged eldest son), and him they believed to be sincerely attached to them. Had he not played the traitor and written down the story of the King's failings and the Queen's humiliation, no one would ever have known the domestic griefs which Hervey's malice has contrived to make loom so large in the life of these sovereigns, who strove so hard, even in spite of an unnatural son, to preserve to the world a fit dignity, and who were in reality so closely linked together by mutual affection.

The daughters could occasionally escape from their father's wearisome chatter and frequent fault-finding.

Anne went sometimes to Tunbridge Wells, where in 1728 she set the fashion of taking walking exercise, to the delight of Dr. Arbuthnot;[1] Emily, always well, as she says of herself, "where there was life and spirit," loved Bath. She wrote how she envied Lady Portland and her daughter "Bab," the princess's special friend, "the charming ball-nights and the sweet mornings where everybody mett friendly and agreeably at the pumps. I can't hinder my heart being there sometimes." But she had to be satisfied with visiting, together with Princess Caroline, the latest London Spa, Sadler's Wells, in Clerkenwell, by the New River Head, which became so extremely fashionable in consequence of their almost daily visits in the May of 1733, that the lucky proprietor sometimes took £30 in one morning.

Emily, or Amalie as she spells it herself, was becoming an important person in the royal family. Her firm, fearless character—so well aware of her own position and strength that she never was self-assertive—fitted her to take the lead which upon Anne's marriage was her natural right. She was the favourite, on the whole, of her father and of her brother, the Prince of Wales. Not that she had the least liking for that worthless creature, but when he had babbled out his plans and plots to her would always open them to her parents. She was fond of taking snuff, a habit against which Lady Portland kindly cautioned her, but the princess replies that, though she will certainly remember the advice, yet young people must be fashionable, even to their own hurt afterwards. And Lady Portland could not resist sending her a packet of the particular Bath snuff she preferred, with the cakes and toffee that formed her little remembrances to her old pupils on a birthday. Emily tells her sometime Governess that when the Prince of Wales came to court he introduced much higher play than she was ac-

[1] Suffolk Letters, vol. i.

customed to, over a very silly game—as she considered —called "lottery tickets." He used to win most so he liked to play it, but his sister was aware that people who lost £100 a night felt unwilling to play; she did not like seeing their gloomy faces, and hoped the fashion might soon go out. However, she became a confirmed card-player herself, and loved exciting games of chance, though, to do her justice, with more play in them than "lottery tickets."

The princess Caroline was the daughter upon whom her mother most relied. Her health was wretched and her temperament gentle and melancholy. She had "affability without meanness, dignity without pride, cheerfulness without levity and prudence without falseness," states Hervey, in his set, antithetic style. She was the most kindly of the royal family, unselfish and devout. Often she would try to soften or excuse the faults of the others, and to keep the family peace. "Let us send for Caroline, and then we shall know the truth," the Queen would say in earlier days when disputes arose among the young people.

Anne, the eldest, was the ambitious member of the family. Once she expressed a wish that she had no brothers, and could succeed to the throne, for which the Queen rebuked her, but Anne held to her wish, "I would die to-morrow to be queen to-day," she cried.

Unfortunately the marriageable Protestant princes of Europe were so few in number that it was difficult to find her a husband, since George II would not entertain the idea of marrying her to his nephew, Frederick of Prussia. She was twenty-five when, in 1734, she was married to the Prince of Orange, a man so repulsive in personal appearance, whatever his charm of manner may have been, that the princess was deeply pitied, and even her father was struck with some compunction, and rather hesitatingly asked his daughter whether she really was

ready to marry the Prince. She promptly declared she would marry him if he were a baboon! "Then he is baboon enough to please you," muttered the King. Probably the acclamations showered upon the Prince by the capital put George in an ill-humour, for he perfectly understood that more than half the cheering crowds were, under cover of a Protestant zeal, alluding to the previous expulsion of an unpopular king by a Prince of Orange: by 1734 George II was terribly unpopular.

The illness of the Prince of Orange so soon as he arrived in England caused the wedding to be put off, and the workmen's preparations stood half-finished and ugly about St. James's Palace for some time, which caused the old Duchess of Marlborough to carp at "My Neighbour George" for putting up "an orange box" in front of her windows, meaning the temporary gallery to the Lutheran chapel hard by where the marriage was celebrated.

The Queen's drawing-room after the wedding began before one o'clock and was thronged.[1] "Such crowding, such finery I never saw; with great difficulty I made my curtsey *and the Queen commended my clothes!*" Mrs. Pendarves felt rewarded for her efforts. After the drawing-room there was a ball, but only as a spectacle, for no women danced but the princesses and the train-bearers. Of these latter, however, there were eight, to hold up the bride's train and, what was then remarkable, they were all dressed alike in white and silver with great quantities of jewels and long locks, "a most becoming dress." This would seem almost to date the beginning of the modern fashion of having bridesmaids.

Many towns besides London were illuminated for the happy occasion, and the crowning proof of fashion and popularity was given by Jonathan Pinchbeck's new fan, "the Nassau fan," which every lady showed.

Mrs. Delany.

The details and dresses of this, as of other state ceremonies, were probably supervised by Caroline herself. She was by no means indifferent to clothes. Once in 1727 she had been sent the latest Paris fashion in an amusing manner. Lady Lansdowne, who had gone thither, got the royal dressmaker to dress a doll in the proper style and sent it, by the hands of Mrs. Howard, that the Queen might give it to the court milliner as a model. Her habit of knowing every detail was sometimes, no doubt, carried too far. Lord Pomfret found that he dared not even dismiss an unsatisfactory chairman without priming Mrs. Clayton on the reasons, to tell the Queen. Otherwise the little matter would be misrepresented, nor could he feel that her Majesty would be likely to trust him to manage his own department.

CHAPTER XII

FRITZ

IT remains to describe those unhappy relations of George II and Caroline with their eldest son which cast so dark an anxiety over the Queen's later years. Born in 1707, at three years old "the image of George William of Celle," the young prince Frederick inherited to the full the licentious and pleasure-loving traditions of the family without any of its more sterling qualities, and he possessed of all his mother's characteristics only her engaging charm of manner. His countenance was not exactly handsome, but expressive and attractive, "with the Queen's fine, fair hair." His figure was small and slight, and the first impression he made was almost invariably pleasant, particularly when, on his arrival in England, people noticed "the excellent regard" he showed to the King and Queen, a regard which, in public, he always took pains to manifest. He was clever enough to keep himself technically in the right. He never made the mistake of voting in the House of Lords, but made, on the contrary, a parade of "not influencing" the votes of his servants and officials, though he would sit complacently under the gallery of the House of Commons to hear Wyndham compare Walpole to Empson and Dudley, "who had the misfortune to outlive their master, and his son, as soon as he came to the throne, took off both their heads." His pose of dutifulness and constitutional propriety, his accessibility and

generosity, speedily made him very popular with the commoner classes in London, who were charmed to discover their prince riding privately in a hackney coach, or going to a shop or a show on foot with a pair of companions, and who were of course dazzled by his way of bestowing £100 when £5 would have been generous. The praises of the more discerning he endeavoured to obtain by throwing himself into every movement understood to be unwelcome to their majesties, and gathering among his friends every opponent of Walpole and every satirist of the court.

Yet none of the clever men whom he patronized could acquire a belief in him. While he was still a lad at Hanover, Stanhope thought he had summed up a compound of ill qualities when he told Sunderland that the young Prince "has his father's head and his mother's heart," since he was vain and childish, false and indifferent to truth.

Unluckily George's obstinacy provided Frederick with an excellent grievance. Not only did he put off giving a definite decision on the Prussian marriage treaty, but he refused to entertain any other plan for some years. Frederick was quite ready to arrange a marriage for himself, but without the courage to tell the King so. He had offered, while still in Hanover, to run away and come incognito to Berlin to marry the princess of Prussia. The Queen of Prussia, George's sister, Sophia Dorothea the younger, was delighted, but she could not manage to hold her tongue, and she let the secret out to the English envoy, with the result that Prince Frederick was promptly summoned to England, and the match-making Queen of Prussia finally disappointed.[1]

Once in England, the new Prince of Wales soon discovered a very wealthy lady, whose guardian, the redoubtable Duchess of Marlborough, had all the enter-

[1] Margravine of Baireuth. *Cf.* "Memoirs."

prise required. It was believed that the old Duchess had a scheme for a kind of elopement of the Prince with her favourite granddaughter, the sprightly Lady Di Spencer, who could bring a fortune of £100,000, very desirable for the young spendthrift, whose unconscionable debts in Hanover the King refused to pay, and whose marriage he would not hear of, because it would mean his independence and the relinquishment to him of that £100,000 a year which Parliament was now paying into the royal coffers "on account of" the Prince of Wales.

Caroline, who always made out a good case for her husband, would intimate sometimes that the King had very grave ground of displeasure against the Prince which people did not know of. She would say that she only wished Fritz was as right towards the King as the King was towards him. Perhaps it may have been her policy to leave her husband to do as he chose in family concerns, and save her persuasive energies for affairs of government; the conduct and composition of the royal household certainly would bear out this supposition. Or she may have recognized that this jealousy and dislike of his eldest son was one of those obstinate convictions of George II which no power or persuasion could affect. Lastly, there is the supposition hinted at by Lord Hardwicke that some definite and unrevealed offence had, in Caroline's eyes as well as her husband's, placed Frederick outside the bounds of family affection. The ill will between them, noticeable already in 1727, increased rapidly in intensity during the years 1734-7. At first the Queen had rather resented Hervey's hatred of her son. "He is such an ass that one cannot tell what he thinks," she would allow, "and yet he is not so great a fool as you take him for, neither." To others she would plead that "the poor creature" had not a bad heart at bottom, but that he was "blown up" by knaves and fools to do things that were neither honest nor sensible.

The knaves were such persons as Pulteney, Carteret, Chesterfield, Pope, and Bolingbroke, who are assuredly to be credited with the skilful tactics the Prince exhibited in using party faction against his father. The fools, such as Dodington and the young Duke of Marlborough, shared his gambling and his other vices. Perhaps the story [1] of Miss Andrews illustrates more than one side of his private character. He had made dishonourable proposals to this young woman, it seems, with "large offers," but finding "he could neither touch her heart nor tempt her vanity," he desisted. Two years passed, the young lady fell into dire financial straits, and bethinking herself of the Prince, sent a friend, who appealed to him in thoroughly melodramatic fashion and with much circumlocution at a masquerade, and begged him to lay the distressed lady's case before the Queen. "The Prince promised the mask that he would punctually observe her commands, and so they parted. The pleasantness of the masquerade hurried this affair out of the Prince's head till about a fortnight after, when he received a letter" to tell him that Miss Andrews was actually detained in a spunging house in Fleet Ditch. "The Prince was struck to the heart (for he is both generous and good-natured) at his having been so neglectful of this poor young woman." He donned a disguise, went to the place in a hackney coach, gave her £200 on the spot, and sent £300 more next day, courteously adding that he would not visit her again himself lest unkind comment should arise. Some months after, Miss Andrews lay dying, and charged a friend, once more in a mask, to let the Prince know "that she prayed for him with her last breath for his extraordinary goodness and generosity." The Prince burst into tears when he related this message and the whole story to his sisters,

[1] *Cf.* Mrs. Delany, who had it from a direct intermediary (Miss Deering) at the masquerade.

declaring "that he loved her memory, and could not help admiring her virtue, though she had treated him with the utmost scorn and contempt."

If such is the kind of story told for Prince Frederick's credit, his admiration of virtue and practice of generosity would seem to be best stirred by a theatrical parade of a very superficial kind.

It was, however, perfectly reasonable that the Prince, though he might console himself well enough in practice with continual amusements, and easily found feminine society, should resent the King's refusal to give him a proper establishment; and upon Anne's marriage, in 1734, he began to take definite steps.

He first desired, and obtained instantly, an interview with his father, and requested formally (1) to be allowed to go to the war, then raging along the Rhine, as a volunteer, (2) to have an increased allowance, and (3) to have a proper marriage arranged for him. The first request, as the Prince knew well enough, could not possibly be granted, so the reputation of an ardent soldier was easily gained. But to the two other requests the King gave so evasive an answer, that Frederick, already irritated by the enthusiasm expended on the Princess Royal's marriage, yielded readily to the proffers made by the opposition to present a parliamentary petition for the marriage of the heir to the Crown. It was certainly time, for the Prince was now twenty-seven, and of all the royal family only the eldest daughter was settled. It began to be whispered that their Majesties had a design of keeping their eldest son unmarried in order that their favourite, the Duke of Cumberland, might one day succeed to the throne.

It was Caroline who succeeded in putting an end to the threatened scandal of such a petition by at last bringing the King to let her inform Fritz that his father was about to arrange his marriage, and ask him whether he had

any preference himself. The Prince was too dutiful to have any preference. Unfortunately George II was extremely slow in proceeding further, but Caroline contrived to keep up an appearance of activity by openly talking about "the marriage." She certainly took real steps also, for she wrote to Sir Robert Walpole's brother, Horace, envoy at the Hague, to whom she was singularly frank about her children: "Fritz is now returned to his good behaviour. We have written for the character of the Princess of D. and . . . Würtemberg . . . serious thoughts are entertained of marrying him," and she entrusted to this discreet envoy the task of making further inquiries about the princesses of Würtemberg and Gotha. So that Hervey is probably exaggerating when he declares that the Queen actually went so far in her preparations for a hypothetical marriage as to order her new clothes for the occasion, and purchase jewels to give the bride before the bride was selected. Her court smiled, believing these manœuvres purely a blind; but it was probably by such means that, after a whole year had thus been tided over, she brought the reluctant King to the point of seeing the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha during his sojourn in Germany in 1735. A treaty had, of course, to be drawn up, and the formalities took so long, that they were not concluded till early in 1736. And as by this time the King was in a hurry to set out again for Hanover, he became now as anxious to get the marriage accomplished as he had been before to defer it; and the Princess was sent to London to be wedded in April, 1736.

The Prince conducted himself on this occasion quite as he ought. He paid a visit to his affianced bride the very evening she arrived at Greenwich palace, and next day went to dine with her, and conduct her for an airing on the river. The royal barge, escorted with music, took her as far as the Tower, that she might see the imposing

river entrance to London. On the third day after her arrival the Princess was brought in state to St. James's,[1] going by coach from Greenwich to Lambeth, and then across the river in the royal barge to the water entrance to Whitehall. From thence she was borne in a sedan chair along the quiet green way through Whitehall Gardens and St. James's Park to the palace. At the foot of the steps which led from the garden to the royal reception hall the Prince of Wales met her; he took her hand and led her up to the great drawing-room, where their majesties were waiting to receive her; and as she advanced up the room she made deep reverences "all along the floor" to the King and Queen.

The wedding was celebrated the same evening, and bride and bridegroom supped in public with their majesties. That is, the royal family partook in the presence of the nobility of a splendid banquet, dessert being arranged "like a garden in the Old Style," with fountains, terraces, and grottoes, and a temple to Hymen in the middle, and when the royal family retired the dessert was divided among the noble spectators, as appears to have been a not infrequent custom on State occasions. Afterwards there was a State levée, where were to be seen the most magnificent dresses, several noblemen appearing in gold brocade which cost hundreds of pounds.

The promptitude of the proceedings was characteristically explained by "the deficiency of the laws of precedency in England," which had not settled the rank of the Princess before she became Princess of Wales.

The usual ceremonious undressing took place afterwards; the King and the Duke of Cumberland conducted the Prince to his disrobing, and the Queen and the Princesses the bride, after which invited guests filed through the bedroom to see them in bed.

[1] "Gentleman's Magazine," 1736.

Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, afterwards so unpopular during the early years of her son's reign, was only seventeen at the time of her marriage. She had been brought up quietly, and without much education. She could not even speak the universal tongue of society, French, far less English, which her mother is said to have declared to be surely an unnecessary acquirement, since, as the Hanoverian family had been more than twenty years upon the throne, she supposed most people in England spoke German as often as English. The Princess of Wales was good-looking, but she was awkward, which was the more noticeable since she was tall. Her manner was excessively quiet, and she accepted every occurrence with a natural air of tranquillity which some took for the height of good breeding, and some for the inertness of stupidity. She was the most docile tool to her husband, and during his lifetime never ventured upon so much as an opinion of her own. Nor would she ever, on her own initiative, have done anything to displease her parents-in-law, as Caroline always fully recognized.

Along with a wife the Prince of Wales had now secured his independent establishment; he had a country house at Kew, and a town residence at Carlton Lodge, purchased for him in 1732 from Earl of Burlington, and on which he had begun an extravagant expenditure. His favourite official, Lord Bute, was installed as the Princess's *major domo*, and, what was worse, his principal mistress, Lady Archibald Hamilton, as her Lady of the Robes. The King and Queen, who selected the suite, had refused, with some indignation, to make this appointment when the Prince requested it, but they had left one or two offices empty for the Princess herself to fill, and she, at her husband's bidding, named Lady Archibald. The Princess was utilized in any way possible as a means of insult. At Kensington, for instance,

the Prince and Princess always would come into chapel late, so that the Princess had to crowd by the Queen and pass before her, "between the Queen and where her book lay." The Queen, "finding it troublesome, and thinking besides it looked ill, bore it two or three Sundays, and then desired the Princess's Chamberlain to bring her in at another door, where she could go directly to her place. But the Bedchamber ladies used to come in by this door, and the Prince forbade his wife to go that way." Finally the Princess settled the dilemma by not going to chapel at all if she were not able to go in with the Queen.

In spite of other paltry insults as senseless as this, Caroline exerted herself to maintain outwardly friendly relations, and while the King was abroad for nine months, in 1736-7, she would keep her son and his wife to dine whenever they appeared at her morning drawing-room, and then afterwards the Princess would stay to hear music and play cards in the Queen's Gallery in the evening. The poor Queen was a good deal bored when she saw so much of them, and would yawn afterwards, and tell Lord Hervey that she was more tired with Fritz's silliness and Augusta's stupidity than if she had carried them round the garden on her back.

By most people the young Princess seems to have been held for a harmless nonentity; her highest praise comes from the old Duchess of Marlborough, who had recently acquired a grudge against Caroline. A great deal of company, declared the Duchess, went to visit the Princess, and her behaviour pleased everybody. Her conversation was "much more proper and decent for a drawing-room than the wise Queen Caroline's was, who never was half an hour without saying something shocking to somebody or other, even when she intended to oblige."

By the time parliament met in the February of 1737

the Prince had instigated a personal attack on the King —now returned from Hanover—on what was his vulnerable point, viz., his not paying to his son the whole sum assigned in the Civil List. Now that the Prince had his own houses the King could hardly claim that he really expended the money for him, yet he had not begun to pay the full instalments. And though it is very possible that George was really still defraying his son's past debts, no explanation was ever given. Few things would damage the King's reputation more, or make him angrier, than to have a motion made on the subject in Parliament. This was what Prince Frederick intended to bring about, and his agents, Dodington, the young Duke of Marlborough, and others, were busy canvassing Peers and Commoners in private some time before the plot came to the ears of Walpole.

The intrigue appeared to be so serious that the inquiry then pending upon the Porteous riot paled to insignificance in comparison, and the royal advisers turned their best efforts towards staving off this terrible motion. The King was ill at the time, it was believed very ill, and Hervey charges the devisers of the motion with producing it at this moment because they thought it would fling him into such a fever of rage and excitement as might, in his condition, very possibly bring about his death. He begged the Queen to try persuasion with the Prince, and alarm him by representing the unpleasant results which he would draw on himself in the end, for Frederick was understood to be extremely timid. The Queen, however, from the state of her own health, was by this time almost unnerved, and she refused to see her son. He was such a liar, she said, that she dared not have a private conversation with him for fear of what he might afterwards assert her to have said. So long before as the Excise year, when she and Frederick had had their last private interview, she had felt it only safe to leave

the door of the room half open, and place her daughter Caroline concealed behind it, to be a witness to everything that passed. For four years then, we are to gather, mother and son had never seen each other except in company.

The negotiations were therefore left to Walpole and the new Chancellor, Hardwicke. The King offered increased supplies and a jointure for the princess. The Prince sent to his father the most dutiful messages, and urged on the members of the Opposition. In the end the motion was made, but the government first made a statement of the King's payments to his family, and managed to defeat the motion by thirty votes.

During the debate Prince Frederick justified his mother's fears of his lying. The King had made it a point that his son had never directly asked him for the balance of the £100,000. The Prince, after vainly trying to get Lord Chancellor Hardwicke to listen in private to his assertion and repeat it,[1] ordered two of his servants[2] to state in the Houses that he had often made the application to the King *through the Queen*—implying that she had suppressed his messages. Very angry was Caroline at this attempt to exculpate himself by publicly and falsely thrusting the blame of the quarrel upon her.

There was no satisfaction to be had from victory in such a matter. The King was morose over the humiliation the Prince had inflicted upon him, as well as rue-

[1] He called the Chancellor back, when a deputation of ministers was leaving his presence, to repeat his dutiful sentiments to the King, and that "*he had several times spoken to the Queen.*" Hardwicke declined to hear private confidences and asked him to tell *all* the Lords his message; it was not, however, a message: "I say it to you, my Lord, that you may make use of it as you shall see proper." Hardwicke merely noted it in his private diary. (Harris's "Life of Hardwicke.")

[2] Mr. Hedges and Lord Baltimore, Mrs. Pendarves's faithless lover.

ful at having to fulfil his own promise of a jointure for the Princess of Wales, and Caroline, ill at ease in every way, was irritable and nervous, displeased by any concession to the Prince, and disposed to blame so severely the party spirit of England, and Walpole's lack of organized control over the Whigs, that he felt alarmed, as he subsequently declared, lest the indignation—not of the King but of the Queen—might lead her to dismiss him and call in a Tory administration!

Nevertheless the minister contrived still to keep the confidence of his sovereigns, and he exerted all his influence to prevent them from disgracing their son. With patience wonderful in two persons of such strong decision they refrained from dismissing Fritz from their presence, and he and his wife still occupied the apartments assigned to them at St. James's, and appeared at drawing-rooms and levées: "But the King never seemed to know when he was in the room, and the Queen, though she gave him her hand,[1] on all these public occasions never gave him one single word in public or in private."

At length an open breach was occasioned by the outrageous conduct of the Prince at the time of the birth of his eldest child. It was the sort of insult which the King most fiercely resented, and one which could not be kept from general knowledge. The Prince and his household were, in July, 1737, all at Hampton Court with their Majesties, but lived quite apart from them in the Prince's own wing or "side." The Prince had on purpose misled the Queen by intimating that the birth of the child was to be expected in October, for, knowing the importance attached by his parents on such an occasion to the observance of correct etiquette, and the presence of the customary witnesses, he had resolved to annoy them by secretly conveying the Princess to London, to prevent

[1] Etiquette requiring that he should hand her to her seat or through a doorway.

the presence of his mother or any of the royal family. And when, on the evening of July 31st, it became evident that the arrival of the baby was to be momentarily expected, he actually carried out his intention, with imminent danger to wife and child. In perfect secrecy, for he was implicitly obeyed by his household, he forced the unhappy Princess downstairs and into a coach, and galloped off to the empty palace of St. James's, where nothing could be ready for their sudden reception, not even a fire. A pair of table-cloths had to serve as sheets, and actual necessaries were hastily borrowed from the nearest houses.

In the meantime no rumour of this extraordinary proceeding reached the royal apartments, where the King and Queen sat playing cards as usual, broke up the party, as usual, at 10 o'clock, and all went peacefully to bed at 11, almost the moment of the birth of the little girl, the Princess Augusta, Duchess of Brunswick, of the future.

The Prince having successfully carried out his amazing and, but for the cruelty and danger to his wife, absurdly childish scheme for insulting the King and Queen, now busied himself with revealing his proceedings to them in the manner safest to himself: for his object was always to make them feel annoyed and insulted, while guarding himself from unpleasant consequences by appearing to be in the right. Consequently, at half-past one arrives a courier with a message.[1] The Bedchamberwoman in attendance, Mrs. Tichborne, hurries to the royal chamber to rouse the Queen, who, as the most natural question, asks if the house is on fire. No; the Prince has sent to let their Majesties know of the immediate expectation of the birth of his child. The Queen immediately cried: "My God, my nightgown! I'll go to her this moment." "Your nightgown, Madam," re-

[1] *Cf.* Hervey, iii.

plied Mrs. Tichborne, "and your coaches, too; the Princess is at St. James's." "Are you mad," interrupted the Queen, "or are you asleep, my good Tichborne? You dream." When Mrs. Tichborne insisted on its being certainly true, the King flew into a violent passion, and began to scold at the Queen in German, as he usually did when in very ill-humour. "You see now with all your wisdom how they have outwitted you. This is all your fault. *There is a false child will be put upon you*, and how will you answer it to all your children? This has been fine care and fine management for your son William; he is mightily obliged to you, and for Anne, I hope she will come over and scold you herself; I am sure you deserve anything she can say to you."

Without replying much to his Majesty's very remarkable views upon the situation, Caroline dressed as quickly as she could, and by half-past two set out with her two eldest daughters, two ladies-in-waiting, and three noblemen, to drive as fast as possible to St. James's. They reached the Palace by 4 o'clock, and were puzzled by being told that the Princess was doing very well, but were met as soon as they mounted the stairs by the Prince, dramatically dressed in nightgown and nightcap, as if he had been roused from sleep, who informed them of the safe birth of a little princess.

Though the whole affair was not only astounding, but most annoying to the Queen, she controlled herself so far as not to appear angry. She would give her son no excuse for parading a grievance, and he, seeing her thus tranquil, instantly showed off his folly by pouring out to her the whole story of his doings and dilating on the sufferings and distress of the Princess. Her Majesty asked no questions and made no comments on what he was saying, but at the end seriously told him that it was a miracle that his wife and child were not both killed by his conduct.

She went to see the Princess, and with the utmost kindness refrained from distressing or fatiguing her in any way, only went up to the bed, stooped and kissed her, and asked her, in German: "My good Princess, is there anything you wish, or anything you would have me do? Here I am, you have but to speak and ask, and whatever is in my power that you would have me do, I promise you I will do it." The Princess, however, had only humble thanks and compliments to make, and the Queen retired quickly for fear of exhausting her.

In the meantime Lord Hervey had been mindful of the fatigue of the Queen herself during this extraordinary night and morning, and had prepared a fire and chocolate for her and the Princess Caroline in his apartments, while the two ladies had managed to procure some tea for the Princess Emily and the Duke of Grafton. To them, in Lord Hervey's room, entered Sir Robert Walpole, whose first thought was still to endeavour to prevent an open breach in the royal family. But the Queen's exasperation was at last beyond his arguments. "My God!" she cried, "there is really no human patience can bear such treatment; nor indeed ought one to bear it, for they will pull one by the nose in a little time, if some stop is not put to their impertinence." She found it hard, too, to think what a poor figure they would all make in the other Courts when the story of such an affront should get about. "I swear I blush when I think of the post going out and carrying the account of such a transaction into other countries." Sir Robert suggested that it was an ill moment to be quarrelling on; people talked already of the King's partiality for the Duke of Cumberland. "My God!" interrupted the Queen, "If one is always to bear affronts because something false may be said of one for resenting them, there are none one must ever resent."

It appears that their Majesties had been suspicious that the Princess would never have a child, and that their son meant to pass off a supposititious one; and though that idea was now completely dispelled, the Prince had certainly done his best to make people gossip over the mystery of his mad conduct, and perhaps entertain doubts which might prove disastrous.

But whatever Walpole hoped, or the Queen's prudence might in time have brought her to desire, the King was this time so highly incensed that there was no holding him back. Like his father and the generality of German princes, George II felt everything that touched his family to be of such intense importance, that this revolt of his son loomed like a dire state crisis. The attitude of the Hanoverian House, in these respects, was so different from the cold relations of the English nobility with their families, that the latter were always laughing at it and at the domestic habits of the royal family as, to their thinking, unpolished and homely.

Prince Frederick made his position no better by assuming an air of innocent surprise at his parents' displeasure; and writing polite epistles in French to explain his conduct. He pretended that he had not been aware of his father's wishes; that nothing was prepared for the event at Hampton Court; that the empty palace of St. James's was the sole place where the Princess could have proper attendance; and even that she herself had earnestly desired the journey—although all his attendants had been witnesses to her distress and her prayers, for pity's sake, to be left where she was—falsehoods so palpable as to be merely insults. The King steadily refused to see the Prince or to let him come to Hampton Court; and the Prince, after making a profuse show of entreaty, submission, and injured innocence, by letters and by messengers, resorted to giving out that the whole estrangement was the doing of the Queen. She it was

who was offended, and who had taught the King to be so inflexible. To be sure, reflects Hervey, people who want to hurt one will certainly strike at the *head*, rather than at the knuckles.

It had for some time been the Prince's contention that he, as the heir, was a more important person than the Queen-Consort, an argument he used to try with Caroline, and which she persisted in treating with mockery: it could not matter, in any case, she would say, "Since, believe me, my dear Fritz, let your quality be ever so great, the King, if I was to die, would never marry you." Fritz was now petty enough to think he inflicted an indignity on his mother by addressing her without the royal title, a detail which the King, for her, most fiercely resented.

So many people were engaged in these transactions that it was impossible to keep them private; and the scandal was increased by the publication in print, almost at once, of all the letters and messages which had passed; they were exposed for the public to purchase, with translations alongside of the originals, which were written in French. Perhaps Caroline's explanatory letter to the Princess of Wales is that of the most interest. The Princess had been made to write and try to involve the Queen in a correspondence, but with tact and kindness Caroline declined to be drawn into it.

"I am very glad my dear Princess to hear you are perfectly recovered of your Lying-in; you may assure yourself as you have never offended either the King or me, I shall never fail to give you every Mark of my regard and affection. I think it would be unbecoming either of us to enter into a discussion of the unhappy division between the King and my son; and when you are truly informed of the several Declarations that have been made relating to your journeys from Hampton Court, by whom and to whom they were made, you will

be convinced that the Conduct of your Husband has no way been misrepresented.

"I hope time and due consideration will bring my son to a just sense of his duty to his Father; which will be the only means of procuring that happy change which you cannot more sincerely wish than I do.

"CAROLINE."

The Prince had at length succeeded in making his father quarrel with him; but he had not succeeded in placing himself in the right in public opinion. George II forbade his undutiful son to enter his house again, in a letter of considerable dignity, the credit for which lies with Walpole and Hardwicke, Hervey, and Caroline herself; it took the efforts of all of them to word an irreproachable reproof. The ministers, unlike those of George I on the parallel occasion, lamented the quarrel and left all the opening possible for future conciliation. In the family circle the sovereigns avowed their relief at their son's departure. "Thank God," said the King, "to-morrow night the puppy will be out of my house." (His Majesty usually termed those he disliked puppies, boobies, or fools.) "I hope in God I shall never see him again," said Caroline, once or twice; and she never did. He set up his separate court at Norfolk House, in St. James's Square. The Duke of Norfolk, however, had not consented to sell it to the Prince until he first ascertained from the Queen that she and the King had no objection.

The difference between this quarrel and that of the former reign, however, was great, and especially in the King's conduct. He made it clear that the personal ill behaviour of the Prince within the circle of his family was the sole cause of his disgrace, and that the penalties, as far as possible, should be restricted to himself. No one was forbidden to serve him, and those who held offices in the two households were expressly told that they might go to both. The Princess, especially, met with

all the consideration possible. Though she was a driveller, said Caroline, she was in no way a wrongdoer; she did not deserve any punishment, certainly not to have her only child taken away from her. The King wrote: "I will leave the care of my granddaughter to the Princess till the time comes when I shall think it proper to give directions for her education." But in fact he never removed either the Princess Augusta or any of the succeeding royal children from their parents. Ill as Fritz behaved, and little as George II approved the methods of the Princess of Wales, after his death, he would not interfere with her natural rights over her children. It was only in order to obviate the intrigues which the Prince was certain to attempt that foreign ambassadors were requested not to visit him, and private written messages sent to the peers to say that the King would not receive at court those who visited the Prince. More vigorous steps were afterwards, it is true, taken by the King, but not till after Caroline's death, when her prudent counsels were no longer heard.

The Prince of Wales's court was for the rest of his life the focus of faction, almost of sedition. Bolingbroke is said to have exercised a great ascendancy over him; and Bolingbroke's "tract," "A Patriot King," is credited with having given an unfortunate bias to young George III. The clemency which had permitted Bolingbroke's return to his wealth and estates was ill repaid. Other literary men also frequented Carlton House, and their pens were set to blacken the credit of the Queen, the King, and Walpole's ministry, with an ability for which Carteret, Pulteney, and Chesterfield were responsible, and a spite which personal greed inspired. One of the latest recruits was Thomson of "The Seasons," and the motive which made him a politician may be adduced, as an example. He had been tutor to the son of Lord Chancellor Talbot, who had in consequence bestowed a

pension upon him out of some government funds which were at the discretion of the Chancellor. When Hardwicke became Chancellor he renewed such of these pensions as were applied for. Thomson (a Tory) was "too proud" to apply; the pension was not renewed, and Thomson betook himself to Carlton House and abused the government.[1]

Some of the attacks upon the government were in themselves little works of art, such as Chesterfield's amusing tale of the automaton wax army, and his Fable,[2] too, of the Chinese potentates who liked to have their *ears tickled* is delightfully humorous, apart from the spiteful description of the skilful "mandarin," who could not always succeed with his Majesty, but "tickled her Majesty's ear to such perfection that, as the emperor would trust his ear to none but the empress, *she* would trust hers to none but this light-fingered mandarin, who by these means attained to unbounded and uncontrolled power and governed ear by ear."

Chesterfield's progress from court to opposition had begun with his adherence to Townshend and to Mrs. Howard, and culminated when, in 1733, he began to lampoon the King and Queen, and took to wife the Countess of Walsingham,[3] daughter of George I and Melusina von der Schulenburg. To this illegitimate daughter George I was believed to have bequeathed a great fortune; but George II had calmly suppressed his father's will (he burnt one copy and purchased the acquiescence of the German trustee of the other copy), and as the Duchess of Kendal did *not* bequeath her enormous property to her daughter, Chesterfield "was bit," in the slang of the day. He threatened the King to bring a

[1] Harris's "Life of Hardwicke."

[2] In "Fog's Journal," January, 1736, or *cf.* Chesterfield's *Works* (*Miscellaneous*).

[3] Betrothed 1733, married 1734.

lawsuit for the money, and it is said that this alarmed George II into paying him an immense sum. Chesterfield, like Hervey, left behind him an elaborate volume to blacken the fame of those whom he had fawned on in life. His malicious "Characters," almost as clever as those of Pope, are no whit more trustworthy. His description of Caroline is so plainly malicious as to be unnecessary to refute; he credits her with "a dangerous ambition" which, "had she lived much longer, might have proved fatal either to herself or the constitution!" George II he depicts more skilfully; but when he asserts that he never knew the King to "deviate into any generous action"; he had already forgotten how the King had made him a K.G. at the same time as the young Duke of Cumberland (in 1730), and had himself defrayed the whole of the costly charges, that Chesterfield might suffer no inconvenience.

Chesterfield had let it be given out that he was writing *a history*, and gave himself some airs about it. He once desired Lady Sundon (Mrs. Clayton) to tell her Majesty "he had been giving her fame that morning." "I daresay he will paint you in fine colours, that dirty liar," says the King. "Why not?" says the Queen, "Good things come out of dirt sometimes; I have ate very good asparagus raised out of dung." Hervey, whom no one, of course, knew to be compiling his own revelations, remarked upon the certain faults of the three histories being written, as was said, by Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, and Carteret. They would all, replied the King, have as much truth in them as the Thousand and One Nights. "Not but I shall like to read Bolingbroke's, who, of all those rascals and knaves that have been lying against me these ten years, has certainly the best parts and the most knowledge. He is a scoundrel, but he is a scoundrel of a higher class than Chesterfield. Chesterfield is a little tea-table scoundrel, that tells little womanish lies

to make quarrels in families, and tries to make women lose their reputations, and make their husbands beat them, without any object but to give himself airs; as if anybody could believe a woman could like a dwarf-baboon."[1] George II is perhaps quits with Chesterfield.

Of other and coarser lampoons on the Queen it is impossible here to speak, but one of the most shocking was the *Memoirs and History of Prince Titi*, because it was known to be inspired by the Prince of Wales himself. He had it first published in French, in 1735, then an English version appeared,[2] "translated by a person of quality," and was sold at 1*s*. 6*d*. for everybody to buy. It was in the form, dear to the political wits of the age, of a fairy tale, in which a virtuous prince was persecuted by his miserly parents. The Queen especially was savagely satirized: her stoutness, her love of reading, her fondness for the Duke of Cumberland are turned into the coarsest ridicule: "she stored up *linen* and made a fortune by selling it" (the Queen seems to have patronized Irish manufactures, and probably those of Manchester, the popularity of both being fiercely resented by the London weavers). The sovereigns are practically accused, in this vile little publication, of actual fraud, and of striving to disinherit "Prince Titi," who himself is painted, of course as generous and unworldly, talented and noble-hearted, a faithful friend, a dutiful son, and a most modest prince —and everything, in a word, of which the real Prince was the opposite.

[1] Hervey, vol. iii, p. 161.

[2] 1736. A copy exists in the British Museum.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAST YEAR—1736-7

THE last year of Queen Caroline's life was full of agitation and anxiety, first on account of her husband, then from the misconduct of her eldest son. In addition she was obliged to give much personal attention to parliamentary politics, and the strain told heavily on her strength, while the pain of her long-concealed ailment made her both mentally and physically less able than usual to support her trying responsibilities.

Probably she did not herself suspect how serious her case was, for she consulted no physician, or, when she did, gave him misleading information, but the pain must often have been very severe. With such wonderful stoicism did she conceal her sufferings that those about her ascribed them to gout, and the King was never permitted to know that she was unfit to walk with him in the garden, or to stand about at the drawing-rooms, nor does the observant Lord Hervey seem to have noticed symptoms of illness other than what he took for a fit of the gout, which, indeed, was the Queen's own explanation of an attack which compelled her, in August, to stay in bed for a few days.

Trying as George II's behaviour had been, especially to his wife, after his return from Hanover in 1735, Caroline was dismayed to find in the spring of 1736 that he intended to go abroad again. Nor could the interest of being Regent allay her anxiety when he prolonged his

stay for an unusual period. She was extremely desirous to get him back to England. Not only must she have feared that her influence was weakening, but it was a shock to find that after so many devoted years her husband's affection had at last really fixed itself elsewhere. Everybody knew what the attraction was which kept his Majesty abroad, and that general knowledge was an additional bitterness to the Queen. There were reasons of state, too, against this long sojourn in Germany. Rioting was rife all over the country. The royal visits to Hanover had excited more and more discontent as time went on, and although George II seldom, if ever, hampered the English government as his father had done on such occasions, the Londoners were much more bitter against the son on this count than they had ever been against the father. In 1736 they were in a peculiarly unpleasant frame of mind. The royal Birthday, always the occasion for testifying loyalty, was almost ignored; the shopkeepers complained, the populace grumbled, shouted, and rioted. The opposition wits seized the opportunity, and seditious papers were scattered about lavishly. On the Exchange a paper was stuck up: "It is reported that his Hanoverian majesty designs to visit his British dominions for 3 months in the spring." On the gate of St. James's one morning appeared an advertisement: "Lost or strayed out of this house a man who has left a wife and 6 children on the parish," a reward of 4*s.* 6*d.* being offered for tidings for him, "nobody judging him to deserve a crown." Complaints were circulated by the opposition that the King was lavishing English money on German favourites and worse, and, most galling of all, sympathy was voiced for the Queen—so good a wife to be so shamefully deserted. In the meanwhile the Prince of Wales, at whose court originated most of these insults to the King and Queen, was more popular than ever, and receiving the "freedoms" of the City and the

City companies, usually staunch supporters of the Hanoverian Whig government.

Sir Robert Walpole became really anxious, and began to consult with the Queen how to lure George II back. With his usual estimate of the value of women favourites, and convinced of the Queen's superior talent, he begged her to invite Madame de Walmoden to England, since it certainly was she who kept George in Hanover. At first Caroline refused; it was too much to ask of her. But Sir Robert insisted. Only let the Walmoden come and the Queen, he declared, would shortly have the upper hand over her and the King alike; but if the King supposed her to be jealous of the new mistress she would never win him back. And he used some plain terms about her Majesty's vanished personal attractions. At length, though with tears in her eyes, Caroline gave way, and tried to please the King by sending a warm invitation to bring the lady back with him. It was the supreme instance of her capacity for being convinced against her feelings and her wishes, and acting upon reason and not feeling.

The King was immensely pleased by his wife's invitation, though his own common sense prevented him from taking advantage of it. He had probably too good a knowledge of what the fashionable world would say to expose his wife to that mortification, but he showed his gratification in his outspoken letters, which the Queen used often to hand to Sir Robert to peruse.

The King and Queen were in the habit of writing very frequently to each other. As has been observed before, Caroline was as voluminous a correspondent as other members of the family—and the King, in his turn, would write her lengthy productions by the regular posts, as well as by the special courier who travelled to London every week with the official correspondence. These epistles were long and intimate: "two or three sheets,"

says Chancellor King, on the authority of Sir Robert Walpole,[1] "twelve to fourteen sheets," says Hervey, (and later, "forty to sixty"!); his letters told her exactly what he did every day, even to "minute things, and particularly of his amours, what women he admired," and to this the Queen would actually reply with sympathy, "not scrupling to say, that she was but one woman and an old woman and that he might love more and younger women."[1] And by submissiveness in this as in all things the Queen could in the end effect whatever she desired with him, "without which it was impossible to keep him within any bounds."[1] As Hervey independently bears the same testimony, this extraordinary picture must be accepted.

Hervey had no patience with the triviality of much of his Majesty's correspondence, and declares that most of it was "not only unworthy of a man to write but even of a woman to read," and yet he allows that upon delicate and personal topics George's expressions were so exactly just that if he could always have *written* his arguments he would have been a very dangerous opponent. As so often in Hervey's abuse of the King, we seem to distinguish something more than he intends to describe—a shrewd insight, a gift of apt and vigorous language, nullified by a *bourgeois* pettiness of behaviour.

It was December before the King could bring himself to order the royal yachts and their attendant men-of-war to cross to Holland to fetch him. And by the time they reached the Dutch coast a winter storm was brewing which the Admiral, Sir Charles Wager, expected to be severe. He was for waiting in port till it was over, but the King, as usual in a hurry when once he had begun to move, and personally fearless as ever, thought that no reason for waiting. "I have never seen a storm," said he. Sir Charles insisted; George lost his temper:

[1] King's Diary, in Campbell's *Lives* (vol. iv, p. 633).

"Let it be what weather it will, I am not afraid." "If you are not, I am," replied the Admiral. At last the King positively ordered him to sail, vowing that if the Admiral refused, he would go in a packet boat. "Well, sir," finally remarked Wager, "you can oblige me to go but I can make you come back again."

The storm came on with such violence that, though the men-of-war and some of the smaller craft in attendance had already set sail, the royal yacht was unable to get out of the harbour of Helvoetsluys, but this, of course, could not be known in London, where it was believed that the whole fleet had sailed and been caught in the tempest. In consequence there was a great excitement in the capital when day after day passed without tidings of the ships, except the first notification that they had started.

Among the Queen's household and the ministry reigned alarm which soon became almost terror; in the circle of the Prince of Wales an unseemly cheerfulness was manifested. The Londoners were indulging in open jests on the probability of the King's death in the storm. "How is the wind for the King?" was the question, and the answer, "Like the nation, against him." The Queen, however, throughout the week preserved to all appearance her ordinary calm. She held the Monday and Friday drawing-rooms as usual, and only gave way in private when, early on Sunday morning, Sir Robert Walpole came to warn her that sad news was to be expected, for some of the men-of-war had come ashore in battered condition, and the sailors were positive that the yacht could not possibly have lived in such a sea. He probably did not tell her that he had felt it imperative to call a Council to prepare the necessary proclamations to announce the accession of King Frederick should the next news be that the King was cast away.

It is clear that the gravest apprehensions were enter-

tained by all who knew the Prince. Sir Robert Walpole, no sentimentalist, could not refrain from expressing to Hervey his pity for the Duke and the Princesses when they should find themselves dependent on a brother who cared so little for them: "Greedy of other people's money and lavish of his own," said the prime minister, "he would grudge every guinea they spent, while as for the Queen—Zounds, my Lord, he would tear the flesh off her bones with hot irons! The notion he has of her making his father do every thing she has a mind to, and the father doing nothing the son has a mind to, joined to that rancour against his mother which those about him are continually whetting, would make him use her worse than you or I can foresee . . . the notion he has of her great riches, and the desire he would feel to be fingering them, would make him pinch her and pinch her again, to buy her ease, till she had not a groat left."

Walpole had a complete contempt for the character and capacities of Prince Frederick, and his concern for the Queen and her family was equalled by his fear of the disasters which the rule of so worthless a monarch must entail upon England: "What will then become of this divided family and this divided country is too melancholy a prospect for one to admit conjecture to paint it," he told his friend.

Hervey tried to comfort the Queen, first by maintaining that the Prince was too silly to be dangerous, then by intimating that her Majesty was clever enough to establish her influence over him if she chose. But Caroline contemplated the situation gravely. She replied to Hervey that should the expected disaster arrive she would make no humiliating concessions to her son, but retire quietly to Somerset House and take all her household thither: "And though I have neither so good an apartment for you there as you have here, nor an employment worth your taking, I should have lodged you as well as

I could, and given you at least as much as you have now from the King, and should have thought this the least I could do for my own honour and the best thing I could do for my own pleasure. Sir Robert Walpole I know, said he would retire, but I assure you I would have begged him on my knees not to desert my son."

Caroline at this imminent crisis was thinking still of "the whole" rather than of her personal interests. Nor was her clear vision to be blinded by an attempt of the wily courtier to flatter, as he believed, her secret wish by hinting that Frederick might prove so very bad a king as to make it fit to depose him and set up his younger brother. She earnestly warned Hervey that the Prince, once king, could not be ruined without involving the country. "Whenever," she said, "you change a King of this family it will neither be for NO king[1] at all, nor for any other Protestant king. All sensible people therefore must think of the Prince in this way,—there he is; he must be King, and we will make the best we can of him, though we cannot make him so good as we would."

Thus in her confidences to her most trusted servant, Caroline consistently held to her guiding principle throughout her political career. She had said once before that she would never silently stand by to watch Fritz endangering his family's possession of the throne. She would do all she could to prevent his pursuing a course which might lead to such disaster.

In spite of the symptoms of ill-health which the Queen had begun to feel, and which this anxiety aggravated, she refused to the last to give way to panic, and even after the tidings Sir Robert brought her of dismantled ships and half-drowned sailors, she proceeded in the usual state with all her family to the chapel royal. Lord Lifford, walking in the garden outside, perceived a mes-

[1] Alluding to Hervey's profession of the then fashionable theories on Republicanism.

senger hastening towards the chapel "in his dirty boots" bearing a letter; he took the missive from him and hurried into the chapel to the Queen, saying aloud, "Here is news from the King." The service broke off, all present waiting in suspense, and Caroline was so much agitated that her hands shook too much to allow her to open the letter. The Duke of Grafton opened it for her and announced aloud that His Majesty was safe. A general relief was visible, the interrupted service was resumed with feelings of thankfulness, and the Queen ordered the lucky messenger a gift of sixty guineas.

Princess Emily wrote graphically [1] to Horace Walpole, who was at Helvoetsluys with King George, what the anxiety had been: "What mama underwent since Friday last can't be imagined; for she never was easy since she heard that the sloop of the English Secretary's office was come here with so much difficulty, and that they had left you all at sea. But a Sunday morning, before nine, Sir Robert came to Mama to give her the dreadful account of the three men-of-war being come, and lord Augustus's [2] ship without sails or masts. Then you may imagine what we all felt. We went to Church as usual, and about 2 the messenger came in and made not only Mama and her children happy, but indeed everybody. The consternation was great before, and they seemed all to dread to hear some bad news; but now pray be careful and don't get out until you are sure of seeing our sweet faces, and then we will all make you as welcome as we can, for I cannot afford any more to be so frightened, for we are all still half dead. I pitied poor Mrs. Walpole extremely; but I saw her yesterday, and we thanked God heartily together that you are all safe. Sir Robert hath been very childish, for he drank more than he should, upon the arrival of the messenger, and

[1] *Cf.* Pyne's "Royal Residences," vol. iii, p. 57.

[2] Fitzroy, second son of Grafton, Captain in the navy, aetat. 20.

felt something of the gout that same night, but he is perfectly well again. I hunted with him yesterday at Richmond, and he was in excellent spirits. I thank you, dear Horace, for letting me know so exactly how my sister does; I am very happy she is so well. Mama commands me to make you her compliments; Caroline desires hers to be given to you also; and I remain your sincere friend upon land, but I hate you at sea, for you take my stomach and rest away, and I love both eating and sleeping."

Anxiety was not yet wholly allayed, however, for when the yacht at length put to sea, a second storm compelled a return to harbour, and the Queen's anxiety for her husband and for her daughter Anne, who was seriously ill in Holland, made her thoroughly ill. She was unable to rest until at length George reached home in January, 1737. The relief of the ministerial party made itself manifest in congratulations and festivities. "Nothing now to be heard of but the King," and the Prince's court was again left deserted. George showed his pleasure at the attentions of his nobles, for if he did not conceal his ill temper, neither did he hide his feelings when pleased. "Vast crowds" came to be presented, "and everybody at court looks happy." Caroline was very much relieved by his good humour and the marks of affection he showed to her, for she had been nervous lest his return home should be marked by the same ill temper and apparent absence of confidence which had distressed her the year before. She now kept her word to the court and made up for not having celebrated Twelfth Night by having a ball and all the customary play (for money) which was counted upon on that gay evening.

His Majesty, however, soon damped the general joy of his adherents by retiring to his chamber with a very bad cold, and seeming to be seriously ill. The Queen

put aside all care for her own health to attend to his. Nobody knew exactly how ill the King might be, for he would see no one, not even Sir Robert Walpole, and would transact no business. It began to be rumoured that he had only escaped drowning to release the nation in a more matter-of-fact way, and the circle of the Prince was once more jubilant. Sir Robert Walpole, evidently supposing that a king too ill to see his minister must be very ill indeed, allowed the Queen to see that he did not believe the reassuring reports she brought from the royal bedside. He asked her whether she was flattering him, or herself. The Queen was so much annoyed that she declared to Hervey that the snubs she met with from the King were nothing to the affronts she suffered from Sir Robert, feeling, probably, that he had no right to be rude to her, and that he need not suspect her of deceiving him. In fact, though the King was not well enough to open Parliament in person, he was by no means dying, and once again the hopes of the Prince and the opposition proved to be baseless.

This was the time the Prince of Wales chose to get the motion moved in the House about his income. The King, who was getting well, took the affair, to everyone's surprise, quite calmly, and never lost his temper over it even in private. But the Queen's nerve had been overstrained, and in the domestic circle she betrayed a tendency to break down, which surprised Hervey and infinitely distressed the Princess Caroline. The Queen declared that she despaired of this spectacle of family division, of which she could see or hope no end; the whole family would be ruined when their foes had so strong a handle; it got, she said, the better of her spirits and her resolution; she could neither eat nor sleep for her distress, and she thought in the end it would kill her.

Anything which seemed to endanger the stability of

the Hanoverian throne in Great Britain always disturbed Caroline far more than her husband, who had not so vivid an imagination. She could not endure to think of the possibility of an ignominious retreat from the lately acquired kingdom, and this in consequence of the follies of her own family; but she was always alive to that possibility. It was as if she had foreseen the '45. In their extreme excitement the Queen and her devoted daughter let slip all propriety in their private talk, and, as Hervey declares, would "wish a hundred times a day that the Prince might drop down dead of an apoplexy, the Queen cursing the hour of his birth, and the Princess Caroline declaring she grudged him every hour he continued to breathe.

The summer witnessed the Prince's egregious ill-conduct at the birth of the little princess Augusta; and though this placed him so thoroughly in the wrong as to give the King and Queen a strong handle against him, fresh cares arose from the steps taken to check his party by the publication of letters and papers in answer to the lies and abuse of the Queen disseminated by the Prince. "My dear firstborn," cried the Queen to Lord Hervey, "is the greatest ass and the greatest liar and the greatest canaille and the greatest beast in the whole world, and I most heartily wish he was out of it."

The King was puzzled to think how two such people as himself and the Queen came to have such a son as Fritz; he wished somebody could prove that he was a *changeling*, and characteristically plumed himself on having known his son for an idiot long before the Queen's motherly affection had allowed her to confess it.

At length, after this agitating autumn, the Queen's strength suddenly gave way. She had gone, on the morning of Wednesday, 9th November, to her new library in the Green Park, when she was taken ill, and had to go

home and to bed. The morning court was beginning to assemble, and the King came to propose that those who had arrived should be dismissed, and notice given that no court would be held that day. Rather than permit this, and let the public and the King realize how ill she was, Caroline declared that she felt better, and would go to the drawing-room, and she actually got up and dressed and went into the reception-room. This reassured the King, who talked at his ease to the courtiers, while the Queen, looking sadly ill, broke off her round of courtesies to own to Hervey that she could not entertain the company as usual. The moment the King left the drawing-room she at once retired and went back to bed, where she grew steadily worse.

As she had never owned to having any other malady than the universal gout, everyone assumed that this attack was but a particularly severe fit, which rather annoyed her, yet she would not confide what was her real distress, an internal rupture, to anybody. The King indeed might have more than a suspicion of the truth, but to him she had originally made light of the matter, and when he expressed his concern had made him promise never to mention it. With an obstinacy not unusual in invalids, she still persisted in keeping the cause of her pain concealed; only her German nurse, who could not talk English, and Lady Sundon (Mrs. Clayton) could have explained the truth, and Lady Sundon was away from court at the time herself, seriously ill. Precious time was thus wasted. The Queen suffered so much pain that she could not lie still a moment, and at last said to Hervey, who had been urging her to try this and that nostrum: "Give me what you will, I will take it," and strong potions, of whisky and the like, were administered with no result, naturally, but a high fever, which was in its turn treated with the vigorous blood-letting then still in fashion. "I have an ill that nobody knows

of" was all she would say to the Princess Caroline, and it was George himself who, on the third day of her illness, ventured to send for the surgeon, Ranby, and to confide to him what he feared was the matter. So anxious was the King not to vex his wife that he told her in a whisper, that nobody might hear, how he feared it was "what he had promised never to speak of," but that he must let the surgeon know. Caroline even then begged him, and with a sort of peevishness, an unknown thing to him, not to do so, and when the poor King for once insisted that he could not give in to her, she shed tears quietly on her pillow. It was to her more than a death sentence, it symbolized a kind of humiliation.

It is practically certain that the pride which had led her to this concealment caused her death. She bore the painful operations of the surgeons, like the whole of her illness, with heroic fortitude. Day after day she submitted to their attempts, though she knew the suffering was in vain. "Before you begin let me have a full view of your comical face," she one day bade Ranby, a very ugly man; and, more mischievously, as he was at work, "What would you give now that you was cutting your wife?" (from whom he was then seeking a divorce).

One of her physicians observed afterwards, that never in the whole course of his practice had he seen such perfect civility and courteousness as she showed to everyone about her up to the end, and that not of a mechanical kind, but "suited so exactly to the circumstances both of the persons to whom she spake and the opportunities she took for that purpose as shewed she was absolute mistress of herself, and could judge of all proprieties as much in her last hours as others can when their heads and hearts are most at ease." [1]

[1] Alured Clarke's "Essay towards a character of Queen Caroline." Clarke evidently had his description of the Queen's deathbed from an

And once, when she thought she had spoken with some asperity during a painful operation, "she said with concern that she feared she had shewed more impatience than she ought to have done."

She realized at once the hopelessness of her condition, and bore her sufferings for twelve days almost without a groan, showing no desire for life, though she was cheerfully ready to try what her husband and children urged, saying: "She thought it was worth while to endeavour to preserve a life that she found was so dear to his Majesty and his royal issue."[1] But when the King was not present she would tell her daughters: "Believe me, my dear children, it won't do; at 25 I might have struggled through it, but at 55 I cannot resist." "Poor Caroline," she said to the Princess, who was ailing at the time, "you are very ill too, we shall soon meet again in another place." The Princess Caroline never left her mother's side during the whole fortnight of her illness; the King, too, could scarcely be got out of the chamber, though his presence was often very hampering. Almost beside himself with grief, he had perhaps never shown such affection. All that was within his mental power to do he did to ease her; care was ordered to be taken to ward off the officious importunities of the Prince of Wales, who asked permission to visit his mother. In this George was certainly carrying out Caroline's expressed desire not to let the Prince come to her, should she ever be ill and enough out of her senses to ask for him. "It is all of a piece with his kneeling down in the dirt before the mob to kiss her hand at the coach door," the King burst out, "he wants to come and insult his poor dying mother." Even Sir Robert Walpole was scolded, though the

eyewitness, either the surgeon or one of the bedchamber women. He was a close friend of Lady Sundon.

[1] Alured Clarke.

Queen herself had sent for him, for letting her talk of business. The King would not move further than the ante-room, and would see no one but his children and Hervey. He pressed on his wife food, drinks, and medicines, anything which any one thought might do good or sustain her strength; and although, with a perversity not very unusual in the male sex, he continually forgot to lower his own voice, and had, on the first night of her illness, been anxious but unpractical enough to lie awake on the bed beside her, it is monstrous that this should be construed by the spite of Hervey into the self-absorption of pure egotism. He could not endure that any one should speak as if recovery were impossible, and when she herself expressed a wish that her royal seal, with her watch, should be given at once into his hands, he cried out passionately to leave it where it was, "as safe as in my pocket." His intense anxiety and desperate clinging to hope occasionally expressed itself in sharp remonstrance: "How the devil should you sleep when you never will lie still a moment!" or in futile efforts to talk about old illnesses which had resulted in a cure: probably Caroline realized his inner feeling better than the impatient Princess Emily, who took him to be idly garrulous, and the sardonic Hervey, who set down every painful detail of the Queen's agony and the King's grief, which they themselves had with dignity secluded from every witness save their children and a few intimate servants. The faithful Mrs. Purcell and three of the Queen's Bedchamber women, Mrs. Herbert, "so sensible, so well-bred, so handy, so cheerful and so agreeable to the Queen," with Mrs. Selwyn, and Mrs. Brudenel, attended on her throughout. She was fond of the first two, and begged Mrs. Herbert to stay with her though it was not her turn to wait. They respected their responsibility and left no word behind of the painful scenes they beheld. Hervey,

more trusted than they, the intimate friend—to one of the princesses something more—composed of those last days a dramatic relation, skilfully constructed to invest with horror and disgust the last days of the steadfast Queen, and present the unhappy George as a mere contemptible buffoon. The very facts and speeches he relates sometimes give the lie to the colours of his picture.[1]

Caroline had made up her mind that she should die on a Wednesday, on which day, she said, all that was important in her life had occurred—her birth, marriage, and coronation, the death of George I, and the birth of Prince Frederick. But on Sunday, 14th November, the physicians declared death to be near. With perfect calmness she said farewell to her husband and five children. George was shaken with passionate sobs and tears; she begged him to marry again, advice she had expressed to him often before. "Non, non;—j'aurai des maîtresses," sobbed the wretched man. "Ah! mon Dieu," sighed Caroline, "cela n'empêche pas." She begged Prince William to be a good son to his father, and to make up for his brother's bad conduct, but never to set himself against Frederick; and faithfully during his life did the Duke fulfil his not very easy, and not very well recompensed duty. To her daughter Caroline she intrusted the two young princesses, the gentle Mary and the lively Louisa, and in almost her last connected speech dwelt on their temperaments and needs.

But her sufferings did not, after all, end on that Sun-

[1] It is necessary to emphasize this because Hervey's Memoir is usually cited as though it must be incontrovertible. One instance of his parenthetical untruths may be given here. He observes that Sophia Charlotte, that distinguished Queen of Prussia whom Caroline had so much loved, "was, by what I heard from others, *and particularly the Queen*, a very vain good-for-nothing woman." If he is confusing her with Sophia Dorothea of Prussia his accuracy is condemned.

day. For a whole week longer her constitution held out against the incessant torment, borne still with the same heroic fortitude and almost with cheerfulness. Thus she had time to send for Sir Robert Walpole once more. "I have nothing to say to you," she murmured, "but to recommend the King, my children, and the kingdom to your care."

In the meantime all the court were showing, as they felt, the liveliest anxiety, partly from the prevalent belief that the King would always be *managed* by somebody, and they wanted to propitiate the new power betimes. Would it be the Princess Emily, or Madame de Walmoden? Or would he marry again? And would Sir Robert fall from power? A crowd constantly thronged the outer ante-chamber, where one or other of the ladies-in-waiting sat constantly to give answer to inquirers. Among them were plenty of merely inquisitive persons, cloaking impertinence under the guise of piety. Had the Queen a chaplain present? Had she received the sacrament? The presence of the Archbishop, who came twice daily, should have been a sufficient answer to their impertinence. When they pressed to ask him precise questions, he replied to them adroitly that "Her Majesty was in a heavenly frame of mind."

The circle of the Prince of Wales was expressing the most indecent joy at every report of the Queen's hopeless condition, and that his highness might have instant news of her decease some members of his household were always in the ante-chamber, relieving one another, to await the tidings. The poor Queen was aware of this, and hurt by it, but she only begged that, whatever they might say, they should never be admitted into her own chamber to stare at her. So helpless was George in this crisis, and so inconsiderate his servants, that Grafton and Walpole were tactless enough to present themselves to him in the ante-room where the grief-stricken King sat out the pain-

ful hours of waiting when he could not be beside his wife, and he actually did not know how to secure his privacy but by going in to complain to the dying Queen, who told the Princess Caroline to see that that room was kept clear.

The Queen spent no long time over her affairs, which were indeed in perfect order. She was only anxious that her private property, Richmond Lodge, where her happiest days had been spent, should be secured to the King, and she desired that learned Dr. Butler should be provided for. Her servants, she said, she could trust to the King; he knew what she felt about all of them. She made no will, saying "all she had was from the King, so she would leave it all to him."[1] At length her long trial ceased on the evening of Sunday, 20th November. The King was lying down on the floor at the foot of the bed, Princess Emily in a corner of the room, and Mrs. Purcell was watching. She could still speak, and in a partial delirium muttered: "I have now got an asthma, open the window"; and again, "Pray." Princess Emily at once began to read some prayers. They thought her dying, but she collected her powers again, and asked to be raised in bed and to have water thrown on her face. "Pray louder that I may hear," she said. She tried to join in the Lord's Prayer, and at the end made a movement of her hand, and instantly and quietly expired.

Her husband's grief was profound and pitiful. He shut himself up for hours with her portrait, and asked to borrow Baron Bronkman's copy, which was better, he thought, than any he possessed himself. He talked incessantly of her for days to his children and intimate servants, dwelling fondly on their early life together in Hanover, dilating on her merits. "I never knew a woman fit to buckle her shoe." He showed every mark of honour he could to her memory; whatever she had

[1] Wentworth Papers.

wished was carried out. First he had a complete list of her servants and their payments given to him, that no one might be overlooked, and ordered that all should receive their salaries for their lives, unless provided for by posts as good. The secretary brought him also a list of pensions which the Queen had given from her private purse in charity, to the amount of some £13,000 a year; he ordered "that besides paying all her servants, that charity should be paid, for he would have nobody feel her loss but himself."[1] To the physicians and surgeons, too, he sent liberal gifts of £500 or £300 apiece. On her deathbed Caroline had expressed pity for the unhappy fortunes of Lady Kinnoul, the Earl of Oxford's daughter, and promised to do her some kindness. George was told of this, and said at once that "he was sensible by not knowing Lord Oxford much he had not behaved to him so well as he deserved, but he hoped to make him some amends by immediately ordering Lady Kinnoul a pension of £600 a year." These pensions all came from the King's privy purse. Ten years later, when the son of one of Caroline's *protégés* (Bishop Hoadly) dedicated to the King a play, he remembered her, and sent a gift of £100 to the young man.

Even the improvements she had designed for Kensington Gardens were all completed by George, who could not bear St. James's after her death, but preferred living at Kensington, which was full of memories of her, with his children, and with Madame de Walmoden. Grotesque as it seems to modern feeling, to George it seemed no treason to his wife to bring over the German mistress, create her Lady Yarmouth, and regularly spend his private time with her. Of a fresh marriage no one ventured to speak to him, though at first speculations were whispered in Society, to the indignation of those who could "see the King is so vastly troubled

[1] Mrs. Delany.

still." It was two months before he could face a public levée, or would permit the usual amusements of the court. The Prince and Princess of Wales in the meantime held cheerful court at Kew, where, "as being new things there 's always a great mob attends their going out and coming in," and went openly to balls and operas, and yet the Prince had tried to annoy his father by demanding, as of right, to be Chief Mourner at his mother's funeral. His claim went to the ministers, however, who managed to conceal it from the King, merely telling the Prince that, in the first place, he was in error as to the precedent he quoted, and besides, that they could not lay his request before the King, as he had already bidden the Princess Emily to be Chief Mourner.[1] The funeral, on the evening of Saturday, December 17th, was conducted with the most dignified and splendid display that the respect of her family and household could devise.[2]

No general outburst of eulogy followed Caroline's death. The best wits were all engaged on the opposite side, and those who spoke her praises were damned at once by them as sycophants; only a miserable set of poetasters made her the victim of their bad taste. Those who could best appreciate her merits spoke of them quietly, almost privately. To the opposition all abuse seemed fair, from Pope, who tried to dignify perverse old Jekyll by saying that he drew the laugh—the *horselaugh* —"of ONE who bestowed it equally on religion and honesty," to the scurrilous farce-writers whose indecency extorted (in 1738) an Act for licensing plays and theatres. The best pens of the day have left us only satirical portraits of Caroline and George II, whose mutual affection inspired nothing but derision among fine people.

To this day Caroline's devotion to her husband is

[1] Harris's "Life of Hardwicke."

[2] See the full account in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Dec. 1737.

something of an enigma. Her own mental characteristics were pre-eminently those of a statesman. Capable as she was of mastering her own feelings by reason, and of acting, to use her own phrase, "for the sake of the whole," in utter disregard of details, however unpleasant they might be to herself, she nevertheless through life sacrificed every consideration, her health, her tastes, her very life, to his wishes and to preserve his affection.

Probably too much belief is given, and always will be given, to the malicious pictures of George II's enemies. He lent himself to caricature, and it is true that he was often ridiculous. Anything may be forgiven in England except looking ridiculous. His vivacity and the rapid speech and gesticulation which interested people when he was a lad, in mature age looked absurd. His shrewd sarcasms on the time-serving English politicians were no less apt than his father's heavier contempt, but as he expressed himself in colloquial terms and with a foreign accent his listeners elected to call him splenetic, and to feel disdainful. We are even told, as if of unusually despicable traits, that he grew rather red faced and stout in middle age, and walked jerkily, and that when he was in a passion he was more difficult to persuade than when cool.[1] Even his affection for his wife, they assert, was merely due to his recollections of her early loveliness, the decay of which he was too stupid to perceive.

Let it be granted that George II was unable to appreciate justly Caroline's intellect, in which Hervey does not seem to have been much more of a believer. Did he not always act according to her judgement and rely upon her sympathy, and entrust his family and his kingdom to her guidance? Could the most appreciative husband do much more? To judge him by a standard of morals and refinement then unknown among men of wealth and rank, is as unfair as to deride his honesty and his sense of duty

[1] *Cf.* Hervey's "his temper was a sort of iron reversed," etc.

because his judgement was no wiser than that of Walpole or Pelham. George II was staunch to those whom he believed to be his friends; he was devoted to his wife in the sphere which she felt all important; he was bluntly honest, and his conduct, private or public, was above-board. But because he spoke and wrote in an effusive manner unfashionable in England, because his taste in pictures was shockingly bad and in music uncommonly good, because he had no respect for English literature or English politicians, because he was a careful financier and gave his gifts in a humdrum manner or in private, or else because he sneered at fox-hunting and gaming, and grew less good-looking and more egotistic as he grew older, "he was ridiculous" is to be the final word.

Caroline certainly did not regard her husband with the eyes of Hervey or Thackeray, or even of the sarcastic Duchess of Orleans, who hated his mother so fiercely and observed, not without truth, that the son in various points resembled her. To the homely German mind George was not nearly so ludicrous as to French and English cynics, and Caroline, no more than her husband, must be credited with a sentimental temperament. George, as men went in those days, was an extremely good husband. To be sure he had mistresses, but he never humiliated his wife before them: on the contrary, it was she who had the power to humiliate. Save for her eldest son, Caroline enjoyed much happiness in her family. Her five daughters and her younger son rendered her a great affection. She was in fact, as in name, the mistress of the royal household. A large income was in her unfettered control, and, if she had to indulge her intellectual tastes apart from the King, and had to endure a great deal of dullness in court company and a good many snubs in private retirement, she might very likely consider these as minor annoyances when contrasted with her good fortune, of which George was the sole source. It was

thanks to his confidence and affection that in his absence she ruled the kingdom as Regent, and when he was at home, ruled through him. She knew that she maintained his prime minister, directed his foreign policy, chose his bishops, and could lead him to dismiss any one she disliked if she chose. If she compared her lot with that of the Queen of France, the Queen of Prussia, the Duchess of Orleans, or even the famous Electress Sophia —ciphers in political life, in private humiliated, even maltreated, by selfish tyrants or domineering mistresses— would it be so very strange that she should feel a profound affection for the man who had bestowed so much, who, in an age of greed and profligacy, had chosen her, a portionless princess, of his own free will, and to the end indubitably loved and honoured her beyond any other woman?

"What charm had the little man?" At all events, the failings of middle life would hardly blot out the memory of the early, ardent love which had braved the horror of smallpox, the confidence unshaken by the plainest gibes, and the whole-hearted gift of the means of rule. He had not been fat, fidgety, and absurd when she had married him. They had endured together the long repression which had done so much to dull him, had grieved together over the lost eldest son; and, if George's faults strengthened with growing age, Caroline, growing old beside him, strengthened, like some other women, her courage and her matchless patience, which seemed but to become more perfect beneath provocation. It is impossible that a life's devotion should have been the consummate deception that Hervey endeavours to depict. Hervey composed a prose drama, in which George plays the buffoon, while Caroline is the medium through which the author displays his own superiorities.

Apart from her solicitous care for her husband's credit and position it is probably true that Caroline's "darling

passion" was for power, and her dominant feeling a sense of dignity. The retention of the English crown appeared to her an object worth every endeavour and sacrifice. She never spared trouble, or even the greatest cost to herself, to present the royal family with a united front towards the world. Those whose aid to this end was valuable she conciliated, whatever her own personal view of them, and it was partly this desire to avoid alienating those who might injure her family which led her to overdo, sometimes, her graciousness of manner, and made those whom she was unable to oblige accuse her of insincerity.

They were not numerous, for she contrived to conceal, perhaps actually to overcome, prejudices against those who were, or might be, her helpers; Horace Walpole, for example, slovenly and unpleasant, of whom she had more than once expressed her dislike, but who proved the most admirable of servants to her cause and family, she finally addressed as "the best heart and most honest man I know."

For the opinion of the general public, as for everything superficial, she cared very little, though she attached importance to that of her equals in rank; and Alured Clarke's assertion is probably true that she knowingly sacrificed "her interest with the great and her reputation with the many to her duty to the King, her love to her children, and her regard to the public welfare."

She is sometimes accused of coarseness because of her very plain way of talking; but her peculiarities of speech can be seen to be chiefly the result of thinking and talking in three different languages at once, and often we only know Lord Hervey's translation of her French. She "would compound words and phrases" to express her meaning, a habit which gave pleasure to those who followed her thought, but caused derision in the many;

"She loved a repartee, was happy in making one herself and hearing it from others," but the English courtiers did not appreciate her caustic wit any more than her broad views of politics, which did not always fit with their insular conceptions. Hervey's "A Morning at Court," which he wrote to amuse her, is professedly a skit, and must be understood to exaggerate, though the tolerance which enjoyed it as a jest on herself and her ladies can hardly be exaggerated. Her sharpest rebukes seem to have fallen upon humbug and pomposity. If Lord Harrington, she said once, "ever borrows six hours" for the duties of his office, "it is for something that might be done in six minutes, and ought to have been done six days before." She once remonstrated with an Ambassador who was trying to obtain some advantage, but in a very haughty manner, by asking him: "If I had a dirty nose and saw my handkerchief lying on the floor, do you think I should beckon the handkerchief to come to me, or stoop to take it up?" If she was sometimes too crude, it is better to be crude than hypocritical. Against her occasional lapses of this kind is to be set an excellent taste both in art and letters. She may not have appreciated certain English poets, but she admired Pope and Addison, and she observes that, although Lord Bolingbroke said that the French were as bad poets as the English were politicians, she nevertheless is still fond of Corneille, Racine, Boileau, and Regnier, very likely, she adds, because she understands French so much better than English.

"This excellent Queen," said the judicious Speaker Onslow, "was a very wise woman in what she knew: She had an high sense of religion":—a testimony which should overbear the insinuations of those who themselves had none. The question of the soul's immortality was with her a serious one. She could never believe in its possible annihilation, "since, as man was made in God's

image, surely it must be our souls are His image, not our poor bodies," as she had written to Leibniz earlier in her life. Her breadth of mind and tolerance of religious differences grew, not out of indifference, but from much study and thought. "She had a good deal of knowledge on many things, and spoke well upon them all. . . . Her errors were few and pardonable: they hurt nobody, and they were so much overbalanced by her good and great qualities that they ought to be forgotten."[1]

[1] Onslow's note to Burnet's "History," v, p. 322 (1833).

INDEX

ADDISON, Joseph, on Caroline, 158; on George II, 164.
Ahlden, 106, 109.
Anne, Princess Royal, 166, 269-70, 323; marriage of, 332, 369; 347, 357, 368.
Anne, Queen, and the Hanoverian House, 5, 158, 161, 167, 169.
Antony Ulric, Duke, of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, 15, 59, 79; his "Roman-Octavia," 134-5.
Argyll, John Campbell, Duke of, 184-5, 198-9, 209, 218, 260, 341.
Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, Princess of Wales, marriage of, 377-9; relations of, with Caroline, 380, 386, 388, 390.
Augustus, Prince, of Hanover, 34-5, 58.
Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, 101-2.

Ballads, political, 230, 248, 261, 294, 302.
Bellamont, Lady (Mrs. Bard), 153.
Bellenden, Mary, 184-5; and the Prince of Wales, 213, 216-7; marriage of, 218, 279; *letters* of, 243, 281; Caroline's kindness to, 332.
Berkeley, James, Earl of, Admiral, 263.
Bernstorff, Baron Andreas Gottlieb von, minister at Celle, 21; 109, 112, 113; in England, 127, 135, 197-8, 202, 214, 224, 232, 271.
Bolingbroke, Henry St. John, Viscount, 168.
Bolton, Duchess of, her impertinence, 196, 203.
Books, 129, 134, 155.
Bothmer, Baron Hans Caspar von, 209, 224.
Brockhausen, 65, 81, 88.
Brunswick-Lüneburg, policy of House of, 5, 44; division of duchy of, 6.
Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, House of, 15.
Bückeburg, Countess of, 170, 208.
Bussche, Frau von dem, 8, 20, 24, 98.

Canterbury, William Wake, Archbishop of, 247, 251.
Carnival, (1689) 38-9; (1690) 45; (1692) 60; (1694) 78; (1695) 115.
Carnwath, Sir Robert Dalyell, 6th Earl of, 197.
Caroline, Princess, 176, 369.
Caroline of Ansbach, Queen-consort, childhood of, 141-2; beauty of, 143; offer from Archduke Charles, 143-5; marriage of, to George Augustus, 148-9; birth of Frederick Louis, 159-61; ill of small-pox, 165; birth of Anne, 166; concern at crisis of

1713, 170; studies English, 171; journey to England, 176; popularity of, 177, 182, 187, 189, 190, 207; her maids of honour, 186; 242; English court of, 183, 203; early attitude of, to ministers, 197-8, 213-5, 224; Sunderland's rudeness to, 205; illnesses of, 212, 225; deprived of her children, 226-8; dislike of George I to, 206; at Richmond Lodge, 238; *letters* of, 239, 396; her preferences, 244-6; and Mrs. Howard, 249, 251, 296, 363-4; and the South Sea, 267; and Walpole, 268, 278, 292-4, *chapter* x, 400; reconciled to the King, 269-71, 273; birth of Duke of Cumberland, 282; life at Leicester House, 283-4; and innoculation, 285; Queen of England, *chapter* viii; coronation, 297-300; love of power, 295, 417; patronage, 316; kindliness, 196-7, 319, 332, 350, 351; interview with Stair, 328-9; unpopular, 329; her feelings on the Porteous Riot, 340-2; on the Excise Bill, 330-1; on party management, 333; on the English throne, 325, 400, 404; affection for George II, 414-6; Regent, 309, 344, 365, 395-7; simplicity of life of, 348-9, 352; methodical arrangements for her family, 355-8; fondness for gardens, 358, 360; for books, 359, 418; anxiety on the King's return (1735), 365, (1736) 398-41; relations with Prince Frederick, *chapter* xii; failure of health, 405; death, 406-11.

Carteret, Lady, 303; John Lord (afterwards Earl) Granville, 327.

Celle, castle of, 7; court of, 19; Estates of, 18.

Celle, Duchess of (Eleonora d'Olbreuse), 10, 12, 13, 21, 55, 60, 86, 128.

Celle, George William, Duke of, policy and position of, 5, 6, 94; tastes of, 7-9; courtship of Sophia, 11-12; and Eleonora d'Olbreuse, 10, 12-13; ambitious for Sophia Dorothea, 15, 16, 17; difficulties of, 87; angry with Sophia Dorothea, 105, 113, 127; 148; death of, 127, 148.

Chancellors (Lords), Cowper, 202, 235, 258, 260; Harcourt, 169; Hardwicke, 307, 382; Parker, 235, 259.

Charles VI, Emperor (Archduke Charles), 143, 145, 322.

Charles Philip, Prince, of Hanover, 39, 45.

Charlotte (Sophia Charlotte), Queen of Prussia (Electress of Brandenburg), 32, 79; quarrels with Sophia Dorothea, 82, 133; educates Caroline, 142; death of, 146.

Chesterfield, Philip Dormer Stanhope, 4th Earl of, 332, 334, 391-2.

Clayton, Mr., 214.

Clayton, Mrs. (Lady Sundon), 184, 216, 244-5, 327, 371, 407.

Colt, Sir William Dutton, English envoy, 29, 45.

Constitution, Hanoverian kings and, 200.

Cowper, Lady, 175, 183; on the reconciliation, 272; retirement of, 279.

Craggs, James, the younger, 154-7, 173, 187, 277.

Cressett, James, English envoy, 86, 93, 94, 97, 111, 115, 116, 118; opinion of, on Hanoverian conduct, 117-9.

Cumberland, William Augustus, Duke of, 229, 409.

Dorset, Lionel Cranfield Sackville, 1st Duke of, 335; Duchess of, 363.
Dress, 23, 25; (masquerade), 31, 370-1.

Emily, Princess, letters of, 347, 368, 402.
Emperor. *See* Charles VI, Leopold I.
Excise bill, 328-31.

Fabrice, Johann Ludwig von, 182, 289.
"Fifteen," the, 195-7.
Frederick I, King of Prussia (Elector of Brandenburg), 142, 160, 165.
Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, 159, 174, 300, 304, 305-9; marriage of, 333; impertinence of, 344; gambling, 369; conduct of, *chapter* xii; popularity of, 395; and Caroline's illness, 410; court of, 413.
Frederick William I, 125, 155, 186.
French fashions in Germany, 19, 23, 31.

Gay, John, 251, 254, 315; his "Beggars' Opera, 316-7.
George I (George Louis, Electoral Prince, then Elector, of Hanover), 4, 7; character of, 8, 19, 20, 137; marriage of, with Sophia Dorothea, 17, 19; conduct of, to his wife, 85, 122; towards Königsmarck, 91; contemplates separation, 92; at Berlin, 93; attitude of, towards England, 120; acquires Celle, 128, 149; destroys evidence, 129; vindictiveness of, 131; jealousy of his mother, 152, 160; of Prince Eugene, 163-4; of Prince George, 159, 198; conduct to English envoy, 160-2; in the War, 163; to Leibniz, 172; departure from Hanover, 173; reception in London, 175, 181; his Hanoverian servants, 183; his harshness to them, 201; leaves England (1717), 205; returns, 220; quarrel with his son, *chapter* iv; *chapter* vi, relations with his grandson, 305; death of, 136, 287; avarice of, 287-9; unpopularity of, 289.
George II (George Augustus, Prince of Wales, Electoral Prince, and, later, Elector of Hanover), 4, 29, 145-6; weds Caroline of Ansbach, 147, 149; description of, 151; created K.G. by Anne, 158; Duke of Cambridge, 159; anxious to please Queen Anne, 160, 162, 166; martial spirit of, 163, 323; early popularity, 183, 187, 211; Regent in England, 204, 207, 209; attempted assassination of, 211; quarrel with George I, *chapter* iv; reconciliation, *chapter* vii; and the South Sea, 274-5; methodical, 346; ill temper of, 266-7; unpopularity of, 395; generosity of, 412; opinions on English politicians, 337; on Bolingbroke and Chesterfield, 392; on hunting, 348; quarrel with Prince Frederick, 385-9; character of, 414-6.
Grafton, Fitzroy, 2nd Duke of, 296, 311, 401.
Grantham, D'Auverquerque, Lord, 227.

Halifax, Charles Montagu, Earl of, 158, 168.

Hamburg, 133.
Hampton Court, 209, 212, 220.
Händel, 301, 362.
Hanover (capital of Brunswick-Lüneburg-Calenberg), court of, 21, 69, 70; city of, 25, 39; description of (1703), 150-1; estates of, 18.
Hanover, Ernest Augustus, Duke, then Elector of, character of, 6-8; desires Electorate, 8, 63; weds Sophia, Princess Palatine, 12; bargains with George William, 12, 13, 17, 19; succeeds to Hanover, 18; his lavishness, 23, 25; opera and theatre of, 26, 27, 38, 76; kindness to Sophia Dorothea, 29, 33; obtains electoral title, 75-7; economies of, 77; establishes primogeniture, 58, 119; indifferent to England, 120; death, 121.
Hanover, John Frederick, Duke of, 6, 16.
Herbert, Mrs., 184, 408.
Herrenhausen, 93, 165.
Hervey, John Lord, 218; his "Memoirs," 312-4, 369, 397, 409, 416; Caroline's confidence in, 397.
Highwaymen, 192, 338.
Hoadly, Bishop, 326-7.
Household, members of the Royal, 255, 353-4.
Howard, Mrs. (Henrietta, afterwards Countess of Suffolk), 171, 183, 186, 225, 249-55, 336, 355, 363-4.
Howe, General, English envoy, 153, 155, 157, 160-3.
Howe, Miss Sophy, 185; letter of, 242.

Kensington, royal palace of, 227, 358-60, 412.
Kielmansegg, Frau von (Countess of Darlington, half-sister of George I), 151, 203, 221.
Knesebeck, Fräulein Eleonora von dem, 36, 47, 65, 81, 84, 105-7; her escape, 122-5, 136.
Königsmarck, Aurora von, 43, 78, 97, 101.
Königsmarck, Philip Christoph von, 41-3; goes to the Morea, 45; returns to Hanover, 46; style of his letters, 52, 55; and Countess Platen, 49, 50, 79; courts Sophia Dorothea, 50; *letters*, 56-7; recklessness of, 66, 72, 81; jealous, 72; loses his estates, 83; goes to Dresden, 90; conduct there, 91; returns to Hanover, 94; disappearance of, 95-7; opinions on murder of, 99-102; evidence upon, 133.

Leibniz, 26, 27; his observations upon the murder of Königsmarck, 133; relations with the electoral family, 169-72.
Leopold I, Emperor (1658-1705) his war with Louis XIV, 5; source of honour, 11; his service as a career, 35, 45.
Lepell, Mary, 186; and Pope, 221; marriage to Lord Hervey, 279; *letter* from, 280.
Letters, fondness for writing, 47; of Sophia Dorothea to Königsmarck, 51, 54, 64, 67, 68-72; of Caroline, 239; of George II, 397; *see* Duchess of Orleans.
Loewenhaupt, Count, 43, 83, 100.
London, welcomes George I, 175; description of, 178-81, 210-1; violence in, 191-5, 339; weather of, 211.

Marlborough, John Churchill,

Duke of, 154-5, 163, 184, 195, 212, 290.
Marlborough, Sarah, Duchess of, on the royal nursery, 222; on Mrs. Clayton, 245-6; on Princess of Wales, 380; and Prince Frederick, 374.
Marriage (rule of *ebenbürtigkeit*), 10.
Maximilian, Prince, of Hanover, 33; his plot, 58-60; 119.
Meadows, Miss, 185.
Moltke and Max's plot, 59, 62.
Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley, 216-7, 245.

Newcastle, Thomas Pelham Holles, Duke of, 225, 273, 310, 342, 345.
Nursery, the royal, 355.

Onslow, Speaker, 149, 336.
Orleans, Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchess of, 144; her views on Sophia Dorothea, 17, 37, 132; on George I, 20, 121, 233, 264; on George II, 188, 234; on Caroline, 239; on Bernstorff, 232; on the English, 188.
Osnabrück, 16, 18.

Palatine, Charles Louis, Elector (brother of Electress Sophia), 11, 16.
Palatine, Charles "Raugraf," 37.
Party politics in England, 153-7, 167-8, 193-5, 199, 209, 327-9.
Peerage Bill, 260-2.
Pendarves, Mrs. (Mary Granville, afterwards Mrs. Delany), 287, 303, 317.
Peterborough, Charles Mordaunt, 3rd Earl of, on George I, 210, 288; on Mrs. Howard, 252.
Pinchbeck's fans, 370.
Pitt, William, first offence of, 333.
Platen, Baroness (mistress of George I), 29, 31, 151.
Platen, Count (minister of Ernest-Augustus), arranges marriage of Sophia Dorothea, 22; reports on actors, 27; arranges divorce, 105, 107, 112.
Platen, Countess (mistress of Ernest-Augustus), her influence, 8, 28; and Königsmarck, 49, 65, 69; contemporary opinion on, 97-100, 133.
Podewils, Marshal, 64, 80-1, 95.
Pope, Alexander, on Caroline's court, 221, 252-3; on Hervey, 314; 350.
Porteous Riots, 339-41.
Portland, dowager Countess of, governess to the princesses, 228, 234-8.
Pulteney, Sir William (afterwards Earl of Bath), 247, 329, 390.
Purcell, Mrs., Caroline's attendant, 256, 353, 408, 411.

Queensberry, Catherine (Douglas), Duchess of, 317-9.

Richmond Lodge, 237, 249, 352, 359.
Riots, 193-5, 282, 330, 332.
Robethon, Jean de, 215, 224.
Roxburgh, Duchess of, verses on, 216.
Roxburgh, John Ker, 1st Duke of, 185, 216, 225.
Rüdiger, servant of Königsmarck, 96.

St. Albans, Diana (de Vere), Duchess of, 182, 208.
Scarbrough, Richard Lumley, Lord Lumley, 1st Earl of, 242, 249, 295; integrity of, 335-7.

Scharzfels, Castle of, 106, 123.
Schulenburg, Melusina von der, Duchess of Kendal, 36, 151, 201, 269.
Schütz, Baron von, and the crisis of 1713, 168-9, 172.
Schütz, Miss, and Lady Cowper, 203.
Selwyn, Mrs., 184, 408.
Settlement, Act of, 201, 259.
Smallpox, 165, 269; and inoculation, 285.
Sophia, the Electress (Princess Palatine, granddaughter of James I), betrothed to George William of Celle, 11; married to Ernest Augustus, 12; attitude towards Eleonora d'Olbreuse, 13; towards Sophia Dorothea, 14, 29; character of, 30; kindness to Sophia Dorothea, 81-2; ill, 93, 98; *letter* on Königsmarck's disappearance, 108; affection for Caroline, 143-4; heiress of England, 145, 152; politeness to Queen Anne, 157; excluded at birth of Prince Frederick, 159-61; and the crisis of 1713, 167-9; death, 170-1.
Sophia Dorothea (of Celle), Electoral Princess of Hanover (Princess of Ahlden), 3, 4; early position of, 9, 13; legitimatized, 14; her suitors, 15; betrothal to George Louis, 16, 17, 22; education, 19; character, 20, 26, 31, 89; wedding, 24; descriptions of, 29; visits Venice, 34; provokes the ducal family, 33, 87, 93; meets Königsmarck, 42; her French preferences, 44; *letters* to Königsmarck, 52, 110; nurses the Prince, 57; deference to Königsmarck, 60, 67, 74; fear of Countess Platen, 67; depression, 73; at Wiesbaden and Frankfort, 74; Electoral Princess, 76; quarrel with Countess Platen, 80; discovery threatened, 64, 71, 81, 92; hope of flight, 83; asks for funds, 85; letters to George, 88; seeks separation, 92; disgraced, 104; divorce proceedings, 105-114; official account, 106; sent to Ahlden, 106; to Lauenau, 112; imprisoned for life at Ahlden, 114; her penitence, 117; children, 117; submission, 121; melancholy life, 126-9; death, 130; fictitious memoirs of, 132, 135; summary of evidence, 133.
South Sea Bubble, 268, 273-7.
Stair, John Dalrymple, 2nd Earl, 232, 328-9.
Stanhope, Charles, and the Prince of Wales, 262; and the South Sea, 277.
Stanhope, James, 1st Earl Stanhope, intrigues against the Prince of Wales and ministers, 204-6, 209; in office, 220; and the Bills against the Prince, 258-61; dies, 277.
Stanhope, William (1st Earl Harrington), 187, 418.
Stepney, George, English envoy to Saxony, 91, 101.
Succession, the Hanoverian, 4, 44, 145.
Sunderland, Charles Spencer, 3rd Earl of, intrigues against the Prince of Wales and ministers, 204-6, 209, 219; dies, 277.
Swift, Jonathan, Dean of St. Patrick's, 252, 254.

Tea, 155.
Tichborne, Mrs., 384-5.
Townshend, Charles, 2nd Viscount,

198, 209, 212-3; dismissed, 219, 247.

Venice, a city of pleasure, 11, 17 34.

Wager, Sir Charles, 398.
Walmoden, Amalie Sophie Marianne von (afterwards Countess of Yarmouth), 365, 396, 412.
Walpole, Horace (the younger), as an authority, 3, 291 *note*.
Walpole, Horace (the elder, afterwards Baron Walpole), 296, 377, 401, 417.
Walpole, Lady, and Queen Caroline, 293.
Walpole, Sir Robert (afterwards Earl of Orford), 198, 209, 247, 260-2, 269; and the South Sea, 273, 275; returns to power, 278; and George II, 290-3; and Caroline, *chapter* x; on Prince Frederick, 399, 403.
War of the Austrian Succession, 145.
War of the Grand Alliance, 5, 15, 44, 63, 87, 163.
War of the Polish Succession, 322-4.
War of the Spanish Succession, 143.
Warburton, Miss Jenny, 185, 218; married Duke of Argyll, 281.
Waters, the, of Pyrmont, 148; of Sadler's Wells, 368; of Tunbridge Wells, 368; of Wienhausen, 93; of Wiesbaden, 98.
William III and the Hanoverian Succession, 4, 5; his interest in Sophia Dorothea's marriage, 22.

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